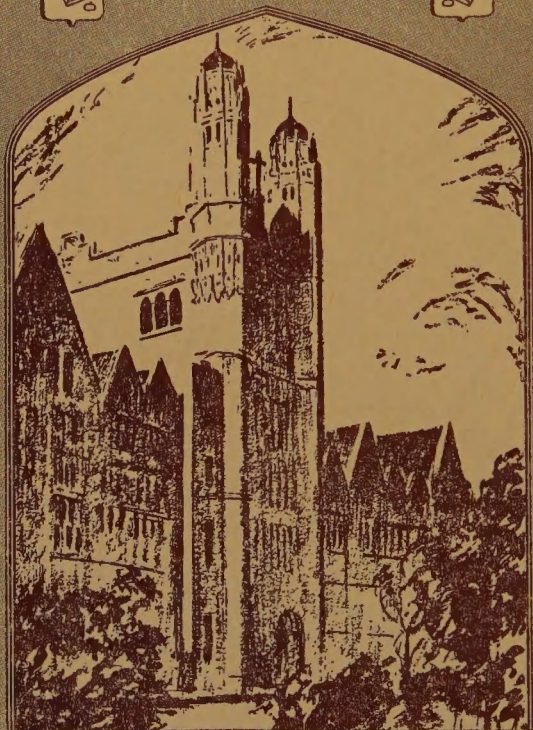


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ORPHEUS CHARMING THE ANIMALS

Fresco at Pompeii

HISTORY OF ROME,

AND OF THE ROMAN PEOPLE,

FROM ITS ORIGIN TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE
CHRISTIAN EMPIRE.

By VICTOR DURUY,

MEMBER OF THE INSTITUTE, EX-MINISTER OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, ETC.

TRANSLATED BY M. M. RIPLEY AND W. F. CLARKE.

EDITED BY

THE REV. J. P. MAHAFFY,

PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT HISTORY, TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

Containing over Three Thousand Engravings, One Hundred Maps and Plans,

AND NUMEROUS CHROMO-LITHOGRAPHS.

PUBLISHED BY

DANA ESTES AND CHARLES E. LAURIAT,

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VOLUME V.

SECTION ONE.

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DANA ESTES AND CHARLES E. LAURIAT.

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■ This plate represents a fresco discovered in 1606 near the Arch of Gallienus, and bought by Pius VII. for ten thousand Roman crowns. Woermann (*Die Malerei der Alten*, p. 114) believes the Aldobrandine Nuptials to be a reproduction of ■ much finer original. Poussin has copied this fresco in a picture now in the Palace Doria in Rome.

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HISTORY OF ROME.

NINTH PERIOD.

THE CAESARS AND THE FLAVII (14-96 A. D.), CON-
SPIRACIES AND CIVIL WARS.

TEN EMPERORS, OF WHOM SEVEN ARE ASSASSINATED.

(CONTINUED).

CHAPTER LXXV — (*Continued*).

NERO, 13 OCTOBER (54 A.D.—9 JUNE, 68 A.D.).

III. — THE BURNING OF ROME ; THE CHRISTIANS.

FORTUNATELY for the world, in the shadow of this palace where dwelt shameless pleasure, in the midst of this very Rome which the apostle calls “the great harlot which did corrupt the earth with her fornication,” there was growing up a new people, whose faith and morals were directly opposed to those of Rome, replacing sensual pleasures by the mortification of the flesh, the cares of earth by a desire for heaven, the love of life by that of death. Never had doctrines and manners more opposite been brought together. A mortal strife was inevitable, in which one or the other must perish ; and it was fitting that the most depraved representative of pagan sensuality should begin the warfare.

In the middle of the year 64 A.D. a fire which lasted nine days destroyed ten out of the fourteen *regiones* of Rome. This was the severest disaster that had happened to the city since the Gallic invasion ;¹ and what the Barbarians then destroyed was but

¹ The fire broke out in the night of the 18th-19th of July, the anniversary of the taking of Rome by the Gauls ; it lasted six days and seven nights, and broke out again at intervals for three days more.

a crowd of miserable dwelling-houses and a few poor temples. Now, what masterpieces of Greek art, what monuments of Roman history were consumed! Poets and rhetoricians, whose art it is to substitute living agents for unknown or hidden causes, have without hesitation accused Nero. Fascination for the diabolical grandeur of the whim might have seized upon the imperial actor, — to burn his capital and rebuild it again according to his own taste, to destroy all the records of ancient Rome in order to fill the new Rome with himself alone. They show him to us, while the fire was doing its work, standing upon the tower of Maecenas on the summit of the Palatine, the better to observe the vast destruction, and there, in theatrical costume, lyre in hand, singing his verses on the burning of



PORT OF OSTIA.¹

Troy, while soldiers of the praetorian guard and slaves of the imperial household aided the progress of the fire, and machines and catapults were kept ready to throw down walls which seemed to offer obstacles. It would be a gratification to let the poets retain their Babylonian festival and leave Nero his crime. But Tacitus, who was probably in the city at that time, relates the accusing rumors without confirming them ;

and his whole account makes it probable that this fire, which in a hot and windy night of July began among some oil warehouses in the trading part² of the city, was the result of one of those accidents so frequent in Rome, where fires, like malaria, were the habitual scourge. Nero was living at this time in his villa at Antium, fifteen or sixteen leagues distant ; and when he reached Rome his own palace had already been consumed. He went about the city all night without his guards,³ directing the efforts of the people to stop the fire, and on the following days opened to the houseless crowd the buildings of Agrippa and his own gardens. Sheds were hastily erected to shelter the most needy, furniture was brought from Ostia and adjacent towns, and the price of corn was reduced to three sesterces the modius.

¹ AVGVST. SC. POR. OST. Large bronze of Nero, representing the circuit of the walls of Ostia and seven vessels within. Nero repaired or perhaps finished this port.

² *Initium in ea parte Circi . . . ubi per tabernas, quibus id mercimonium inerat quo flamma alitur, simul coeptus ignis et statim validus ac vento citus* (Tac., *Ann.* xv. 38). Tacitus was eight or nine years old at this time (Borghesi, vii. 322).

³ *Huc illuc per noctem cursaret incustoditus* (Tac., *Ann.* xv. 50).

However, as the poor had really suffered much, and as the crowd always require a culprit, the Emperor was held responsible for the fire, as he had been for the previous famine. Besides, this there were persons interested in propagating damaging rumors to destroy Nero's popularity with the lower classes. The conspiracy of Piso was in full career; and those ex-consuls who were seen,¹ it was said, in the midst of the crowd exciting the public fury, were no doubt acting in the interests of that conspiracy. At this moment the government directed public suspicion into another channel, and supplied victims for the popular anger by accusing the Christians of having set fire to the city.

This new sect was by the crowd confused with that of the Jews. Whether Christian or Jew, they were seen to pray in the synagogues and to worship the same God, from whom they had received the same sign of their election, — that baptism of blood whose scar was yet borne by many among the Christians as well as by the Jews.² At Rome, where they were not numerous,³ they lived

¹ After the discovery of the plot, one of the conspirators, questioned by Nero himself, answered: "I hate you, as a parricide and an incendiary" (Tac., *Ann.* xv. 67. Cf. Statius, *Silv.* ii. 7).

² The Council of Jerusalem had not forbidden the observance of the old law (50 A. D.). Saint Paul, who had taught the doctrine of evangelical liberty, subjected Timothy to circumcision for the reason that "the Jews of the country would not have listened to the instructions of an uncircumcised person" (Fleury, *Hist. ecclés.* i. 34). Saint Paul makes mention of the fact (*Philipp.* iii. 5) that he had been circumcised.

³ It would be very erroneous to believe that at this time there were in Rome any considerable number of Jews or Christians. Of the former there had been at Rome in the reign of Tiberius about eight thousand men, not counting women and children (Josephus, *Ant. Jud.* xvii. 3, 1, and xviii. 3, 5); of these half were banished to Sardinia, and the rest expelled from the city, — whither, naturally, they returned but slowly, being always liable to the decree of expulsion. In the reign of Caligula they had everything to fear (see Vol. IV. p. 503), notwithstanding the favor enjoyed by Agrippa, a Jewish prince. They however came back to Rome, attracted by the profits to be made in the great city, and under Claudius were again expelled (see Vol. IV. p. 536, and the *Acts of the Apostles*, xviii. 2). Under Nero, therefore, they could not have become very numerous. To make converts was not easy for them. They had some "proselytes of the gate," who from a distance listened to the prayers in the synagogue; but their "proselytes of the law" were very few, inasmuch as it was very seldom that any pagan was willing to submit to the ceremonial law of circumcision. As regards the Christians, — chiefly recruited at this time from among the poor, — hardly any of them had been in a position to make the long and expensive journey to Rome in the thirty-one years that had passed since the crucifixion of Christ, and their missionary efforts, however active, had not had time to produce any extensive results. It appears from the *Acts of the Apostles* (xxviii. 15 *et seq.*) that on the arrival of Saint Paul in Rome in the year 62, the chief men of the Roman synagogue were extremely ignorant in respect to the new faith (*Acts* xxviii. 17 *et seq.*), and that "the brethren" who came out to meet Paul upon the Appian Way must have been few in number, since the small escort, with its large company of foreign prisoners on the way to the praetorian

in the same quarter with the Jews, — a kind of Ghetto, a region of small shops and hovels, where the fire very likely began. They were, however, separated from them by the faith in Christ and in the resurrection,¹ and by the more liberal spirit of their doctrines, of which Saint Paul, in his teaching at Rome and in his epistles, — especially in that general epistle entitled *πρὸς Ῥωμαίους*, — had made himself the representative. But as they had, to define and maintain their dogma, neither canonical books,² episcopal organization, nor councils, their belief, still in the condition of a legend orally transmitted, had something undecided and vague about it; and on account of that very quality was more easily spread than a definite and rigid formula. The new ideas, under Christian or Jewish form, made a few converts from time to time, because they responded to the secret aspirations of lofty souls which failed to be satisfied by the barrenness of the state religion or the haughty philosophy of Zeno. They even penetrated into the palace of the Emperor. Josephus relates that he was introduced to the presence of Poppaea by an actor who was held by Nero in great esteem. Of high birth among his own people, very learned, and above all subtle and insinuating, Josephus won the good graces of Poppaea, who, like many women, not only of her day but of all time, mingled religion with pleasure. “She had,” he said, “a very religious nature;”³ by which we may understand

prefect, considered it safe to allow communication. Seneca appears not to have heard of them (Saint Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, VI. ii.); and Persius, enumerating the foreign religions established at Rome in Nero’s time (*Sat.* v. 179), mentions only Jews, priests of Cybele, and those of Isis. Wherever the Jews had established themselves, — and every great merchant city had its colony of them, — there might Christians be found also. Saint Paul met them in Puteoli (*Acts* xxviii. 14); and it has been asserted that a half-illegible word scrawled in charcoal on a wall in Pompeii was no other than *Christianus* — a conjecture possible, but not probable. The punishments of the year 64 A. D., ordered in a very public manner on a holiday, left in men’s minds such a terror as to justify the language of Tacitus, of Clement, and of the Apocalypse in respect to the number of victims, although it was not really very great. Even at Jerusalem the Christian community was so feeble and obscure that Josephus does not mention it in his enumeration of the religious parties existing in the city; and Justus of Tiberias, who also wrote a history of the siege, does not appear to have mentioned them (Photius, *Biblioth.* 33).

¹ The doctrine of the resurrection, which is singularly veiled in the books of the Old Testament, was, however, accepted by the Pharisees; but the other great Jewish party, the Sadducees, rejected it (*Acts* xxiii. 8).

² Saint Paul, for instance, quotes no gospel, and the apostolical epistles do not suggest their existence.

³ Θεοσεβής γὰρ ἦν (*Vit. Jos.* 3). It must be acknowledged that she was extremely superstitious. Tacitus (*Hist.* i. 22) describes her as given over to astrologers and charlatans: *Multos secreta Poppaeae mathematicos habuerant.*

that, in spite of her heartlessness, this woman was troubled in the depths of her soul by the great problem which was then stirring. The old gods were dying: she sought a new god; and many were like her, — among them Acte, the first love of Nero, many of whose freedwomen, by the witness of the inscriptions upon their tombs, had become Christians. Pomponia Graecina, a severe matron, who wore only the garb of mourning, and was never seen to smile, was accused of foreign superstitions, and probably was either a Christian or a Jewess.¹ There existed, therefore, in the midst of Roman society, even in the highest rank, a leaven of beliefs hostile to the ancient forms. They were silent forces, and hidden in darkness. There was, however, a consciousness abroad that they were secretly at work, and not a few dreaded the wrath of the gods, sure to be irritated by such blasphemous preaching; for both Jews and Christians in their canticles showered their curses upon pagan idolatry, and enough was understood to make it clear that Rome, her gods and her empire, were the object of their religious execration. What must those have thought who could read in Greek these words of Isaiah: “He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it. He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire: and the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my God.”

In spite of the foreign idiom, the threats of these prophecies spread abroad: “I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.” “Jehovah hath smitten the wicked, and the sceptre of rulers. He smote the people in his wrath with a continual stroke.” “How art thou fallen

¹ Tac., *Ann.* xiii. 32. See chap. lxxxvi. sec. vi. The Jews, as after them the Christians, strove to convert the women to their doctrines. The inhabitants of Damascus formed a plan to slaughter all Jews dwelling among them; but absolute secrecy was necessary to their success, because, as Josephus says (*Bell. Jud.* ii. 20), almost all the women in the town belonged to the Jewish sect. Cf. Saint Paul, *Romans*, chap. xvi.; Pliny, *Epist.* x. 97. M. Derenbourg (*History of Palestine*, p. 223) is of the opinion that this was true also in Batanaea, Adiabene, etc.

from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?" "I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of hosts, and cut off their name; their land shall become desolate; the owls shall dwell therein." The Scriptures are full of threatenings against the tyrants of that Babylon which can be so easily interpreted as Rome, and the one only God speaks in every page of his omnipotence, which is to overthrow that of the divinities of Olympus.

For political reasons, and also through scorn of so insignificant a race, Rome had tolerated a religion directly contradictory to her own. But with its secret assemblies, which gave rise to suspicion of criminal practices, with its worship of a man who had died as slaves die, — upon the cross, which seemed a revolutionary menace, — the sect newly come out of Judaea inspired a violent hatred. Even Tacitus and Suetonius, in the age of the Antonines, when the Christians were better understood, did not fail to speak of them still in words of scorn.¹ "These wretches," said Tacitus, "abhorred for their infamy, derived their name from Christus, who suffered death in the reign of Tiberius. His death checked for a while this dangerous superstition. But it revived soon after in Judaea, the place of its origin, and even in Rome, the asylum which receives and protects the vices and crimes of the entire world."² After the fire a few voices cried out, "They are the criminals!" That was sufficient for a crowd, maddened by a great catastrophe,³ to rush at once upon those whom they already knew to be the enemies of their gods, and who were never willing to take part in public festivals and amusements. But whence came these hostile voices? From the populace among whom these "Judaizers" lived,

¹ . . . *per flagitia invisos* (*Ann.* xv. 44). *Christiani, genus hominum superstitionis novae ac maleficae* (*Suet., Nero*, 16).

■ *Ann.* xv. 44.

■ At the first appearance of the cholera in Paris in 1832 the frenzied populace fancied it to be the result of poison, and several persons were beaten or thrown into the Seine as poisoners.

and who had long flung back upon them the scorn which they felt for other races;¹ perhaps some of their own race, within the palace, were responsible for this turn of opinion. The hatred with which the sectaries of the old dispensation persecuted those of the new is well known.² The preaching of Saint Paul had aroused this feeling within the Jewish communion at Rome; and those slaves or freedmen who had been converted by him horrified the Jews who, in favor with Poppaea, had been received by the Emperor on terms of familiarity.³ Nor is it impossible that they imagined they were rendering a service both to Nero and themselves by pointing out as authors of the crime those Christians who were said to take delight in the idea of celestial vengeance, universal conflagration, and the final destruction of the world. Neither is it wholly unreasonable to believe that although the Apocalypse, which bears witness to an intense hatred against the Roman commonwealth, was as yet unwritten, the apocalyptic spirit, with its zeal for the destruction and renovation of the world, existed already in the Church.⁴

The plan, if it existed, was skilfully concerted, and of a character to deceive all men. At first a few persons were seized, from whom torture wrung those confessions which it can always obtain; and afterwards, on their evidence, "a crowd of men, who were convicted not so much of having set fire to Rome as of being hated by the entire human race." To satisfy the people, the incendiaries must be discovered; that is to say, men guilty of a specific crime: but they were sought only among those indicated by popular hatred, and no doubt also by the interested jealousy of the Jews at court.

When Nero had secured the necessary victims, whose defence he was sure no one would undertake, he devised, to seal his recon-

¹ *Adversus omnes alios hostile odium* (Tac., *Hist.* v. 5). The phrase of Tacitus (*Ann.* xv. 44) in regard to the Christians commonly translated "enemies of the human race," ought rather to read, "condemned by the hatred of the human race."

² The stoning of Saint Stephen at Jerusalem, Saint Paul threatened with death, etc. Add to these the internal divisions of the new Church, and the opposition of the Jewish Christians and the followers of Paul, to which so many passages in the Epistles and in the Apocalypse testify.

³ *Ep. Philip. ad finem*. Saint Clement (*Epist. ad Cor.* I. iii. 5 and 6) attributes this persecution to jealousy.

⁴ Cf. *Carmina Sibyllina*, ii. 176. The date of these verses is probably the year 75. It is now nearly demonstrated that the Apocalypse was written during the reign of Galba. Cf. E. Reuss, *Hist. de la Théol. chr. t. I. l. iii. chap. 5*, and Renan, *L'Apocalypse*.

ciliation with the populace, an immense festival, in which the condemned should also have their part. It was not easy to vary the attractions of the amphitheatre;¹ the cross, the axe, and the burning tongs were every-day sights. To bind these wretches to the stake would have been trespassing upon the rights of the circus; to bury them alive would deprive the people of the sight of their agonies of suffering and of death. They were sewn up in the skins of wild beasts and exposed to the fury of dogs, which tore them in pieces. That, however, savored of the arena. Nero found something even better. The rest were smeared with pitch and fastened alive to posts, where they might witness the games granted to the populace in the palace gardens, and at night were set on fire, and served as torches to illuminate the scene. Even Tacitus, in spite of himself, is moved to some slight degree of pity as he recounts these brutal pastimes.

Notwithstanding the accounts of two Christian writers of the fourth and fifth centuries, Sulpicius Severus and Orosius, these executions do not seem to have extended beyond Rome. We know of no decree of Senate or edict of Emperor ordering a general search after Christians; and the real character of this persecution is described by Tacitus when he says that the Christians were sacrificed rather to the cruelty of Nero than to the public good.² There were doubtless cases of isolated murder, like that of Antipas at Pergamus.³ Any magistrate zealous for the ancient altars might find many ways in the existing legislation to punish a Christian,—by accusing him of magic, which is the word Sueton-

¹ The Romans had, however, a rich list of tortures. Cf. Sen., *De Ira*, iii. 3; *Consol. ad M.* 20; *Ep. ad Luc.* xiii.; Marquardt, V. i. 195; Friedländer, ii. 232; and Le Blant, *Comptes rendus de l'Acad. des inscr.* 1866, p. 358. Even the burning of human beings was no novelty. Seneca (*loc. cit.*) and Juvenal (*Sat.* i. 156) make mention of it. The condemned were wrapped in a shirt covered with wax and sulphur, which Juvenal describes (viii. 235) by a name evidently popular,—the “uncomfortable tunic” (*tunica molesta*).

² It was said that they were persecuted as “enemies of the human race;” these words of Tacitus are a rhetorical phrase, and not a penal code. Even in the Roman Empire no one could be condemned upon any such pretext. The profound learning of M. de Rossi and the exactness of his researches are most admirable; he has created a new department of science, that of Christian archæology, for which he deserves the gratitude of scholars. But while following him, I cannot go quite as far as he on certain points. The victims of Nero’s festival were indeed taken from among the Christians; but they were punished as incendiaries, which forbids the theory of a general religious persecution as yet. Suetonius (*Nero*, 16) attributes their suffering to the police measures of the Emperor in the interest of the capital. See Rossi, *Bull. di Arch. crist.* 1865, p. 93.

■ *Revelation*, ii. 13.

nus employs against them;¹ of foreign superstition, which was plainly true; of sacrilege, for he denied the gods; of high treason, for did he not insult the sovereign pontiff of the Empire? Last of all, he could be accused of participation in a secret society and nocturnal assemblies, — a crime imposed upon all Christians by the necessity of their faith, since it obliged them to attend gatherings which must be from the condition of things secret. No other motives than these afterwards guided the conduct of Trajan and his conscience remains undisturbed.

We must not allow our very legitimate indignation at the spectacle of these cruelties to render us unjust towards all those who committed them. We ask no indulgence for Nero; but there were excellent rulers who, in pronouncing the death-sentence on account of religion, believed it required by the laws of Rome, by her religious ideas, and by the public interest. Persecution proves nothing against men like Trajan, Hadrian, and Marcus Aurelius; but it would prove much against the adulterous union of religion and politics if this union had not been the very life of the society of ancient times. Then worship was a part of patriotism, and the most important of all institutions of the city; its prosperity seemed to make the prosperity of the state: so that whatever threatened the state religion was a threat against the state itself. One of the oldest maxims of the Roman government was the prohibition of introducing new religions without the authority of the Senate.² Under the Republic, strange gods and their worshippers had often been expelled from the city; more than once had the former, or at least their images, been thrown into the Tiber, and the latter given over to the executioners.

But if in Rome the Romans defended their gods against foreign gods, outside her walls they respected the religions of other nations as long as they were not, like Druidism, a cause of political disturbance, or, as had at times been the case with Christian preaching, an occasion of disorder in the cities. This

¹ Magicians are burned alive, says Paulus (*Sent.* v. 13, 17).

² Cic., *De Leg.* ii. 8. See the *senatus-consultum* against the Bacchanals, Vol. II. p. 304, and for the conduct of Augustus, Tiberius, and Claudius in regard to the Druids, Vol. IV. pp. 173 and 451. Tertullian was familiar with this severe legislation, which nevertheless had its foundation in the most approved ideas of patriotism and religion. *Vetus erat decretum*, he says (*Apolog.* 5), *ne quis deus ab imperatore consecraretur, nisi a senatu probatus*.

policy can be easily traced in the life of Saint Paul. When the Jews of Corinth dragged him as a blasphemer before the tribunal of the proconsul at Achaia, he refused to listen to them: "If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you; but if it be a question of your law, look ye to it: for I will be no judge of such matters." Later, the Jews of Jerusalem seeking to kill the apostle, the tribune in command in the city delivered him and sent him to Caesarea with this message to the governor: "I perceived him to be accused of questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds." However, as the priests continued to stir up the people against "this mover of sedition,"¹ Felix, to prevent fresh disturbance, began to investigate the matter. But Paul was a Roman citizen; he appealed to the Emperor and was carried to Rome, where the affair ended. He regained his liberty shortly before the great fire; and this forbids us to suppose that a year later the profession of the Christian faith had become a crime against the state.²

Thus, Rome having left to the Jews their national law, Judaism and its different sects, among which Christianity was counted, enjoyed entire liberty in Judaea and in the provinces, — a tolerance from which the government only deviated at intervals to check a proselytism becoming too active, or abuses concealed beneath the veil of religion.³ This continued to be the legal condition of Jewish sects, Jews or Christians of Jewish origin, until the time of Trajan. However, the Jewish war, which began in 66, may have had its victims in Rome. The Church fixes the date of the execution of Saint Peter and of Saint Paul in that city at about this time,⁴ — a tradition which has no proof in history; for outside of the Christian legend there is no evidence that Saint Peter was ever

¹ "Exciting sedition" (*Acts*, xxiv. 5).

² It could not have become so without a decree of the Senate or an edict of the sovereign, either of which Tacitus would surely have mentioned. Concerning such legislation, see the memoir of M. Le Blant, *Les Bases juridiques des poursuites dirigées contre les martyrs*.

³ Cf. Josephus, *Ant. Jud.* xiii. 3, 5.

⁴ Tillemont says in 66; Fleury in 67; Pearson in 68, the date of the martyrdom of Saint Jerome: *XIV Neronis anno*. Saint Clement (*Ad Cor.* i. 5 and 6) affirms this double martyrdom, which gave such great authority to his episcopal see. But it is well known how easily legends spring up in a new-born church; his evidence might have been only an echo of what was already established on that subject. To the imagination of the faithful, two such great apostles could not have disappeared in obscurity.

in Rome, and nothing after the year 64 is known of Saint Paul.¹ But the absence of historic proof need not necessarily weaken this theory; for pagan writers might even have been present at the death of the two apostles — men unknown to them and of obscure condition (*humiliores*) — without attaching any greater importance to the event than to so many other executions of which they were daily witnesses.

It is said that Nero, who began this cruel war of the Empire against the Christians, soon included philosophers in the persecution. The Stoic Musonius, who had been implicated in the conspiracy of Piso, was exiled to Gyaros, and afterwards was forced to labor in chains at the Isthmus of Corinth, notwithstanding his rank as a knight. The celebrated Apollonius of Tyana, who came to Rome to see, as he said, "what sort of a creature a tyrant might be," was brought to trial, accused of sorcery. He escaped, however, this time; but at his departure for Greece Nero decreed that all who made philosophy their profession should be expelled from Rome. The authenticity of this edict rests only upon the testimony of Philostratus, whose authority is doubted. However, it may be admitted that the accusations of Tigellinus against the Stoics, "an arrogant sect, making conspirators and stirrers-up of sedition," was likely to produce some impression upon the mind of the Emperor.² He had nothing to fear from their ideas, for they were not calculated to descend to the people; but they annoyed Nero, and not unreasonably, for they placed men's minds in a position where attempts upon the ruler's life might be honored with the name of devotion to the cause of public good and a moral protest against tyranny. The Forum and political eloquence being silenced, philosophy had become a fashion which attracted a few upright men and many malecontents. All men of intellect philosophized; and did this the more because they fancied they had nothing to fear from the law against treason when they treated of scholastic themes, and under this convenient shelter assumed an attitude of censorship towards their ruler.³ He,

¹ The Acts and the Epistles end with the captivity of Saint Paul [if we except the Pastoral Epistles, which, if genuine, as they seem to be, must be placed later. — ED.]

² Tac., *Ann.* xiv. 57. The informer Capito made the same insinuations against Thræsea (*Ibid.* xvi. 22).

³ The words of Seneca are: *Censuram agere regnantium* (*Ep. ad Luc.* cviii. 13).

in turn, without recognizing his own vices in those of the wicked, or in the virtues of the just those which he did not possess, felt a secret anger against their tiresome sermons, as did Louis XIV. when the old *Frondeurs* and the higher *bourgeoisie* contrasted the austerity of the Jansenists with the gilded vice of Versailles. However, for some time there were to be only skirmishes between the government and the philosophers,—not without victims; but easily to be arrested by a little exercise of good sense on one side or the other. The real battle was to be that of creeds, and was destined to endure for two centuries.

Rome could easily settle the question of Druidism,—a worn-out religion, which was strictly national and wholly without power of expansion. On the other hand, Christianity, spreading among the common people, whom philosophy could never reach, was destined to become the most formidable enemy of that commonwealth whose head was at the same time master of things divine and human, emperor and sovereign pontiff. It was to find strength in its weakness, life in its ardent desire of death; and the grand poem whose first page Nero's martyrs have just written, was to be one of its titles to the sovereignty of the world.

Rome was rebuilt with greater regularity, according to a plan agreed upon by the architects and the Emperor. The streets were wide and straight; the houses not so high, detached, and rebuilt of stone from the quarries of Alba and Gabii, with arcades affording shelter to pedestrians, and with reservoirs of water in case of other fires; the *débris* caused by the excavations, carried down the Tiber, served to fill up the marshes of Ostia. Nero had agreed to clear the ground of all rubbish for the owners, to build the arcades at his own expense, and to give a reward to those individuals who should have finished their houses within a fixed time. He appropriated for his own use an immense space, extending from the Palatine to the Esquiline, and there constructed, "out of the ruins of his country," a palace, gardens in which were fields of corn, meadows, lakes, forests, and vistas arranged after what are now considered to be modern ideas, but are really only revivals of ancient art; it was a country residence in the very heart of Rome. This villa was decorated with such a profusion of precious stones, objects of art, and precious metals that

it was called the Golden House. At the entrance of the vestibule stood a statue of Nero a hundred and twenty feet high;¹ porticos or arcades, having a triple row of columns and a length in all of a thousand feet, surrounded it. The whole of the interior was gilded; through narrow openings in the ceilings, composed of movable panels of ivory, fell showers of perfumes and flowers. One of the rooms revolved by day and by night, to imitate the



RUINS OF THE PALATINE OVER THE CIRCUS MAXIMUS.

movement of the earth. "At last," the Emperor exclaimed, when all was completed, "I am lodged as a man should be."² He should rather have said, like a satrap of the East; for there was in all this less good taste than Asiatic luxury. Nero, who called himself

¹ Suet., *Nero*, 31; Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* xxxiv. 7) says a hundred and ten feet. After his death it was dedicated to the sun. Cf. Spartianus, *Hadr.* 19; Lampridius, *Comm.* 17. The maker of this statue was the same Zenodorus who had made the colossal statue of Mercury for the Auvergnese which was placed on the summit of the Puy de Dôme (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxxiv. 18).

■ Suet., *Nero*, 31.

an artist and a poet, was only so in the lowest sense. This graceless luxury seemed to him a proof of his own omnipotence. "No other emperor," he said, "has realized his power;" and he aimed at marvellous effects, as if to prove that even nature must yield him obedience.¹ For this reason he projected a canal from Lake Avernus to the Tiber, through mountains and across the Pontine Marshes, of sufficient width to allow two great ships to sail abreast,² so that it might appear as if the sea had come to Rome, while Rome with its great increase would extend to Ostia.

This extravagance in building did not diminish the prodigality of his games and feasts, at which a single dish cost at times four million sesterces; of his furniture of pearl and ivory, his garments of silk and purple, which he never wore a second time; of his mules shod with silver, or Poppaea's horses shod with gold; of that army of attendants which required no less than a thousand carriages for the shortest journeys; of his presents to courtesans, to actors, to this musician or that gladiator, who received patrimonies and houses, upon whose walls, during the age of liberty, Roman citizens had hung the consular fasces and the triumphal toga.³ Add to all this his distributions to the people, whom he habituated to a vice which has been perpetuated ever since in Rome,⁴ — throwing fortunes at a venture into the crowd in the form of pledges to be paid in silver, gold, or precious stones, or even in estates, — and the land of Cato seems to be transformed into one of the palaces reared in imagination for the Caliphs of the Arabian Nights.⁵

¹ Suetonius said of Caligula, 27: *Nihil tam efficere concupiscebatur quam quod posse effici negaretur.*

² This canal, which was to have been two hundred and thirty kilometres in length, had for its object the avoiding of Cape Misenum and the promontory of Circeii, where many vessels were lost every year, and to make the Roman Campagna healthy by drying up the Pontine Marshes, — a most useful enterprise, but probably impracticable on account of the level of the soil.

³ Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxxiii. 11; Suet., *Nero*, 30.

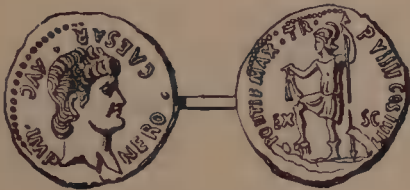
⁴ The passion for lotteries. Nero threw little balls among the crowd, upon which were inscribed the amounts of the gifts to be distributed.

⁵ The *fiscus* had vast resources. In 62 Nero ordered that an immense quantity of corn which had been spoiled in the public granaries should be thrown into the Tiber. Shortly afterwards two hundred vessels laden with corn were destroyed during a storm, a hundred others by fire; and yet so abundant were the resources in reserve that the price of corn did not advance in Rome. During the same year he gave sixty thousand sesterces to the *aerarium*, with the promise that the same generosity to the public treasury should be repeated every year (Tac., *Ann.* xv. 18).

But how were these extravagances to be met? The public resources at last were exhausted, and the treasury impoverished. The Emperor had recourse to the most extraordinary means. The Romans had presented the spectacle which fortunately the world has never seen but once, — that of a people enriching itself at the expense of the whole world. With the Empire this pillage came to an end. But since labor is the only producer of riches, and there was very little work done, especially among the conquerors; since the taxes levied from the subject-nations were moderate, and the increase in number of the citizens exhausted certain sources of income, while expenditure was augmented every day in behalf of the two new powers, the army and the court, — the Emperors were in the same situation as was the house of Capet when it left its narrow domain to govern France, and as the Tudors were after the Wars of the Roses. Forced by want, Philip the Fair raised or lowered the value of coin and burned the Templars; Henry VIII. stripped the Church and sent his nobles to the scaffold. The Emperors employed similar financial methods: they took gold



AUREUS OF NERO.



DENARIUS OF NERO.

wherever they could lay hands upon it; and to make their possession sure, took also the heads of its rightful owners. For centuries the Ottoman Empire obtained its revenue in the same way. Kings, sultans, and emperors have been

led by a bad state organization to murder that they might rob.

Before having recourse to the law against high treason in order to obtain money, Nero made trial of other methods. Reviving Sylla's idea that the coin is merely a symbol, having whatever value the state pleases to assign to it, he diminished the weight of the *aureus*,¹ made 96 denarii out of the pound of silver instead of 84, and doubled the alloy, making it 10 per cent instead of 5.² But the gain was slow and small; he sought for swifter

¹ See Vol. III. p. 53, n. 3. According to Letronne, the *aureus* of Caesar weighed 125.66 grains; that of Nero 115.39. Pliny says (xxxiii. 3, 4) "that Nero reduced the *aureus* to one forty-fifth of a pound;" but that would be the weight of 7 gr. 280, and no gold coin of this Emperor fell so low (Saglio, *Dict. des Ant.* i. 563; see word *Aureus*).

² Lenormant, *La Monnaie dans l'Antiquité*, iii. 30.

measures. He had asked — that is to say extorted — the gifts of private individuals and of the provinces for the rebuilding of Rome.¹ These proving insufficient, he pillaged throughout the Empire all public properties, which are usually feebly protected. In Greece and Asia he seized the precious offerings and the images of the gods from the temples.² At Rome he took all the gold which the Roman nation had consecrated to its tutelary gods in its prosperity and its reverses; he even ordered the statues of the Penates to be melted down. After robbery comes taxation;³ the genius of finance, which was hereafter to develop such fertility of invention, revealed to him a new source of profit. He made sumptuary laws; he forbade the use of purple and violet, and then stealthily encouraged merchants to sell these dyes, that he might confiscate the estates of the purchasers. He found still another means of raising money, — legacy-hunting; he decreed that the property of all those who showed themselves ungrateful towards their ruler in their wills should belong to the public treasury. But where did this ingratitude begin, where end? A praetor for whom he had acted, in company with other comedians, paid him a million sesterces for his part. In such proportions did he expect legacies to be made in his favor. The law concerning high treason (*majestas*) was not extensively made use of until after the conspiracy of Piso, in the year 65.

IV. — CONSPIRACIES AND EXECUTIONS; SENECA, LUCAN, THRASEA; STOICISM.

FROM the time when some of the most honorable men in Rome united together to kill the first Caesar, and others to avenge him and to take his place, there had always existed in the city the secret conspiracy of rivals or republicans, and the public conspiracy of orators. The declamatory rhetoric which was the staple of Roman education perverted men's minds, and showing them the

¹ Suet., 38, and Dion, lxii. 18.

² This sacrilege caused a revolution in Pergamus, where the citizens prevented the agent of Nero from bearing away their statues and pictures (Tac., *Ann.* xvi. 23). Rhodes also refused to allow herself to be robbed (Dion Chrys., *Orat.* 31).

³ Tac., *Ann.* xv. 45.

past in a false aspect, rendered the educated class hostile to the present. According to their temperament, their vices, their virtues, or the condition of their fortunes, these opponents of the imperial government were malecontents who regarded the supreme power with ill-will, rivals who wished to seize it for themselves, or republicans who dreamed of overthrowing it.¹

In the history of Tiberius we have seen how many rival claimants contested the Empire with him;¹ each reign had its crop of them, from the time of Tiberius to that of Diocletian, so long as the military monarchy endured. We have seen them in the reign of Nero, — at least, Tigellinus caused Sylla and Plautus to be put to death upon this pretext; others appeared later, and probably all are not known to us. As for republicans, it has been already stated that they were more numerous under Tiberius than in the time of Augustus, and that their number was very greatly increased during the reign of Nero. But we must understand the true meaning which the name “republic” then had. It did not signify that free commonwealth where each citizen, sovereign in the Forum, made the law, which he afterwards religiously obeyed. No one would have been reminded of the sons of the conquerors of Hannibal in beholding that tattered crowd which of its royalty retained only the right to be impatient at the circus when Nero delayed the games, and became silent as soon as the sovereign threw his napkin to them from a window, by way of signal that his dinner was over.² The knights, who no longer had the farming of the taxes nor the criminal judicature, had ceased to be a power in the state. The same was not true of the Senate. Great ruins need to be seen from a distance. During the years immediately succeeding the battle of Actium men had no respect for this accidental Senate, into which every victory had pushed its successful soldiers. But when, in the lapse of time, things could be viewed in their proper relations; when, during the political leisure of five reigns, men began to look back to those happy days in which imbecile or frivolous tyrants were unknown, — both sight and memory reverted to those Conscript Fathers who had conquered Italy and subdued the

¹ See Vol. IV. p. 407 *seq.*

² The presiding officer of the races threw a white handkerchief into the lists from his balcony. This was the signal for the start (Friedländer, ii. 212).

world. Then the curia appeared like the temple of wisdom, and the Senate became an idol to be worshipped, and Lucan called it "the venerable Order." This idol the Emperors, parvenus of yesterday, treated badly enough, forcing it to commit a thousand unworthy acts, but with every sign of external respect. Nevertheless it was a great name, and men believed that it could easily be made once more a great power in the state by merely putting reality behind the empty show, by reducing the Emperor to the position (indicated by his title, *princeps*) of first senator. This is the point that was arrived at after the death of Caius, and now again under Nero; revolutionary ideas went no farther than this. This the Antonines appeared to have accomplished by the regard which they showed towards the assembly, and their popularity was due quite as much to this policy as to their virtues.

Nero, on the contrary, publicly manifested his disdain and scorn of the Senate, as Caligula insolently did. He was suspected of an intention to abolish it, and he permitted one of his flatterers to say to him, "I hate you because you are a senator." It is not surprising that many of the Conscript Fathers joined the conspiracy of Piso, which "became powerful as soon as it was formed." Tacitus is not explicit as regards the ulterior designs of the conspirators. Some of them spoke of liberty and the Senate, others of a new emperor. It is evident that the disgust which the aristocracy felt for Nero must have inspired a desire to be rid of him; that a revolution would be attempted by those whose interests it would promote,—namely, the Senate; that, finally, without suppressing the head,—the representative of that unity of power whose necessity all men recognized,—precautions would nevertheless be taken to subordinate that head to the assembly.

These conspirators were not men of the golden age or of antique virtue. There was as much vice and profligacy in their houses as in the palace of the Emperor, and not any clearer knowledge of the true needs of the state. Their chief was Piso, of the illustrious family of the Calpurnii. He possessed those advantages which at that period fascinated the people without as yet exciting their envy,—an immense fortune, high rank, and affable manners. He was helpful to the poor, whom, after the

manner of the patrons of ancient times, he defended before the tribunals; accessible to the humble, the most obscure of whom never left his presence without bearing away aid, or at least encouraging words; loving pleasure and luxury, like all of his rank, and unscrupulous as to the methods by which he obtained them;¹ and also, like the men of his time, aiming at the highest place solely from the petty ambition of not remaining second. He willingly consented to be raised to that place, but did not propose to take the trouble of personally leading the conspiracy.

The plot was principally military. Nero had divided the command of the guard between two prefects, — Tigellinus, his favorite, and Faenius Rufus, who had been kept in the background and wished to emerge therefrom. The latter had won over tribunes, centurions, and even soldiers, who were indifferent to political questions, but, some of them, ashamed of the Emperor's degradation; while a greater number were anxious for a change simply for the sake of change, or possible promotion. In their train came the multitude of bankrupts and malecontents who are the usual recruits of conspiracies and riots.

Among the senators engaged in the plot was one of the consuls-elect, Plautius Lateranus,² — the only man, perhaps, who cherished the idea of constitutional reform. Seneca knew of it.³ There was no safety for him except in the death of Nero, who had sought to poison him. Without assuming any active part in its execution, he perhaps promised himself to derive some advantage from the good will which several of the conspirators manifested towards him. His wounded vanity as a poet induced Seneca's nephew, Lucan, to join in the conspiracy. This author of *Pharsalia*, — who in his poem so easily puts aside the truth of history, as in his life, the favorite of Nero and companion of his pleasures, he left behind him at the palace door the lofty maxims of the eulogist of Cato, — Lucan, good courtier though he was, could not quite consent to flatter Nero's unfortunate mania and acknowledge

¹ He abducted the wife of one of his friends (Tac., *Ann.* xv. 59).

² The magnificent palace of this Roman served as a residence for Emperors, and was given to the Popes by Constantine (Bunsen, *Beschr. der Stadt Rom.* III. i. 469).

³ Tacitus (*Ann.* xv. 61, 65) does not affirm his complicity; Dion (lxii. 24) does not doubt it. Juvenal evidently alludes to it in this verse: *Quis tam perditus ut dubitet Senecam praeferre Neroni?* (*Sat.* viii. 211.)

him to be emperor of poetry as well as emperor of the world. Upon this Nero forbade him to read his verses in public. Forthwith the poet bethought himself of Brutus and Cassius, and undertook to play their part;¹ we shall see how he carried it out. Epicharis, a woman who had joined the conspiracy, strove to win over a chiliarch of the fleet of Misenum. The man betrayed her; but she denied everything, and the secret remained safe. This, however, showed the conspirators that suspicion had been aroused, and that they must make haste. They proposed to Piso to kill the Emperor when the latter should come, as he was accustomed to do, without his guard, to visit Piso at his villa at Baiae. The senator refused. He was afraid that if the blow were struck at Baiae, before he himself could reach Rome some other man of like ambition might seize the Empire, or perhaps the consul Vestinus might attempt to restore the Republic. The assassination was postponed till the public games, and Flavius Scaevinus, a senator, begged for the honor of striking the first blow.

The evening before the day appointed, Scaevinus made his will and ordered his freedman Milichus to sharpen a dagger which he had taken from a temple in Etruria and believed destined to serve as instrument in a noble enterprise. He then gave a great banquet to his friends, freed those slaves whom he loved best, and gave money to others. He also ordered Milichus to make the necessary preparations for bandaging wounds and stanching blood. These circumstances roused the suspicion of the freedman; he hastened to the palace and told his story. Scaevinus, when summoned, at first denied everything. But he had previously held a long consultation with another conspirator, Antonius Natalis. They were questioned separately; their stories did not agree, and Natalis, put to torture, made a full confession, giving the names of Piso and Seneca. Scaevinus, being informed that Natalis had confessed, disclosed other names, among them Tullius Senecio, Lucan, and Afranius Quintianus. Lucan incriminated his own mother, Acilia; the two others denounced Glitius Gallus and Asinius Pollio, their best friends. Such was the noble courage of these haughty republicans! At the mere threat of

¹ See the flattery which he lavishes upon Nero at the opening of *Pharsalia*.

torture, they lost self-respect; and to save their own lives delivered up to the executioner their friends and kindred. Why is not Lucan as much a parricide as Nero, when he accused his innocent mother?¹ To what depth of cowardice had despotism and corruption dragged even those souls which seemed of the highest strain! Never had the moral standard of the world fallen so low.

A woman and a courtesan put these unworthy Romans to shame. Epicharis had been held in prison. "Nero ordered her body to be racked by torture; but neither stripes, fire, nor the untiring rage of her executioners, exasperated at the fortitude of a woman, could conquer her." Next day, as she was carried in a litter to the place of torture, being no longer able to walk, she slipped a cord round her neck and strangled herself on the way. Some soldiers also showed traces of antique heroism. Nero asked a centurion why he became a conspirator. He answered, "Because after the crimes of which you are accused I could do you no greater service." To the same inquiry, the tribune Subrius Flavus made this reply: "You had no more faithful soldier as long as you deserved to be loved. But I have hated you since I saw you murder both your mother and your wife, and become a charioteer, a buffoon, and an incendiary." As he was led into a neighboring field, where men were digging a grave too narrow for him, "They cannot even do that properly," said he. The tribune whose office it was to put him to death commanded him to hold his throat right. "See that you strike right!" was his reply. The other centurions died without weakness: the same cannot be said of many of the senators.

Piso was urged to take some resolute step,—to speak to the people, to the soldiers, or at least to venture upon a desperate struggle, since at the hands of the Emperor he had nothing but death to expect. But these endeavors seemed too formidable to the indolent patrician, who was an actor like Nero,² and who perhaps would have governed no better than he. He eulogized the Emperor highly in a codicil to his will, and waited quietly until the arrival of the soldiers bringing him the order to die. The

¹ Nothing, at least, was proved against her, and Nero forgot her.

² Tac., *Ann.* xv. 65.

praetorian prefect Faenius Rufus also disgraced his testament with base regrets.

The consul Vestinus was more courageous. He gave a great banquet, and while seated at table was interrupted by the arrival of soldiers calling for him. He rose and followed the tribune into a chamber, where the surgeon was already in waiting. His

veins were opened, and he was carried, still full of life, into a warm bath, submitting to his death without a word.

Lateranus, the consul-elect, refused to reveal anything; Epaphroditus, the messenger of Nero, only gained from him this reply: "If I had anything to tell, I should tell it only to your master." The tribune who had the execution in charge also belonged to the conspiracy. Lateranus stretched out his neck without a word; and as the first blow only wounded him, he shook his head and placed it again in a proper position to be struck off.¹

Seneca could not die so simply. He had prudently refused to be put forward; but some of the conspirators, it was said, desired, after Nero should have been made away

with by Piso, to get rid of the latter also and make Seneca emperor. He was returning from Campania to Rome on the day fixed for the Emperor's murder, and had stopped at a villa four miles beyond



SENECA.²

¹ Epictetus, *Dissert.* I. i. 20.

² Marble statue found at Tuscum (Campana Museum; H. d'Escamps, *Descr. des marbres du Musée Campana*, No. 73).

the walls, when Nero, urged on by Poppaea, sent to inform him of the accusations of Natalis. Nero asked the messenger upon his return if the guilty man had executed judgment on himself. "He has no idea of doing so," answered the tribune, and was sent back with an order of death. Seneca received it unmoved, and called for his will. The centurion refusing him this favor, he begged his friends to witness that it was impossible for him to requite their services. "I bequeath to you," he said, "the example of my life." And as they burst into tears, "Where," he said, "is that philosophy and reason which should have prepared you, during all these years, for any stroke of destiny?" His wife Paulina did not wish to



TOMB OF SENECA ON THE APPIAN WAY.¹

survive him. He at first opposed her determination; then yielded, fearing that she might be exposed to outrage after his death. "I have showed to you," he said, "what might induce you to live: you prefer the honor of death; I will not be jealous of such courage." The same instrument opened the veins in the arms of both. As his blood flowed slowly, he ordered that the veins in his legs should be cut. His eloquence did not forsake him even in his last moments; he called for his secretaries and dictated to them a long discourse. Still death did not come; he drank hemlock without effect. Then, as the soldiers were in haste to finish the matter, he entered a warm bath; and, as the master of Plato in

¹ Restoration from Canina (see *Prima parte della Via Appia*, pl. xviii.).

the Athenian prison scattered a few drops of poison in honor of the divinity, Seneca sprinkled his slaves with water as a libation to Jupiter the Deliverer. Seneca wished to be the Roman Socrates. If not in his life, he almost became so by his works.

Paulina, whose wounds had been bandaged by the emissaries of Nero, lived a few years longer; but her ghastly pallor remained a memorial of her sacrifice. Lucan, whose detestable treachery did not avail to save him, also received sentence of death; Nero allowed him to choose the manner of it. The poet wrote a note to his father recommending some corrections to be made in his poem, dined plentifully, and held out his arms to a surgeon, who opened the veins. As he felt his extremities grow cold, he recited lines from the *Pharsalia* in which he had described the somewhat similar death of a soldier. These men, who had no firm belief at heart, died theatrically; even the best of them attitudinizing in the presence of death, like gladiators in the arena.

The name of Lucan in Latin letters has a popularity which does not extend to his work.¹ The battle of Pharsalia was a magnificent subject, the most tragic which a patriotic poet could have chosen, since it was connected with the most important event of ancient times,—the death of the Republic and the birth of the Empire. With the aid of history, which offered to him great men, great subjects, contrasts of manners, ideas, and ambitions, the author had no need of the dangerous assistance of mythological commonplaces nor the ordinary conventionalities of composition. To treat such a subject suitably, however, demanded that maturity of talent which in the nature of the case could not belong to a poet of twenty-five years. Lucan also lacked grace, sentiment, and simplicity; for the latter quality, which might seem to belong to those who are as yet undazzled by the false glory of the world, is nevertheless in art one of the last gifts of the Muse. As the youth who wishes to seem a man speaks with a deep voice and carries himself stiffly, so the *Pharsalia* has verses which seem to come from a brazen trumpet; and throughout the poem runs too strong a sap, sending forth rugged and vigorous shoots, but

¹ It was popular for some time in Rome. Suetonius (*Lucani vita*) remembered public readings of the poem, and mentions the extravagances of booksellers in illustrating copies which were for sale.

failing to produce those pleasing and delicate flowers which a sweeter and truer nature causes to spring up under the hand of Vergil. Voltaire, who favors Lucan for several reasons, says of his poem: "I seem to see a bold and immense portal, which leads only to ruins." Perhaps the grandeur of his story was fatal to him. The primitive epic, which speaks in the silence of all other witnesses, magnifies history in creating it. But in the ages when all secrets are known, history mars the poets who strive to play with colossi which are not of their own creation. We prefer to see Caesar, to see Cato, face to face, than reflected in the imperfect mirror of Lucan.

Seneca had nearly reached the end of his writing; Lucan was just beginning his: this double murder must be added to the crimes whose memory weighs so heavily upon the fame of Nero. We shall meet the philosopher once more; but here we take leave of the poet, who perhaps might have accomplished greater things if he had been allowed to live.¹ His clear and energetic style, his lofty images and fine phraseology, recommend him to the lovers of literature; but he has no contribution to make to our book, for his history is untrue, his eloquence is that of the schools,² and his philosophy belongs to the Porch, where we prefer to seek it for ourselves.

The executions being ended, the banished being sent away into exile, and the confiscations decreed, Nero published an edict, with an address recounting at length the full particulars of the plot and the confessions of the conspirators. Then recompenses were awarded,—two thousand sesterces to each of the praetorians, who were hereafter to be exempt from paying for rations of corn; triumphal ornaments and statues in the Forum to Tigellinus, to Petronius Turpilianus, and to Nerva,³ and those of the consulate to Nymphidius. After this came the base adulations of the Fathers, who offered horse-races in Nero's honor, with sacrifices; and Anicius Cerialis, the consul-elect, proposed a temple for the god

¹ M. Nisard thinks not, however, (*Poètes latins de la Décadence*, ii. 31); and perhaps he may be right, for the faults of Lucan were not of a kind to be easily cured.

² Some of his speeches, however, are very fine; for instance, that of Cato near the temple of Ammon, whose oracle he refuses to consult because his own conscience is sufficient for him (*Phars.* ix. 574 *seq.*). Quintilian considered Lucan greater as an orator than as a poet.

³ Cf. Borghesi, *Œuvres*, v. 29.

Nero.¹ The dagger of Scaevinus was consecrated to Jupiter the Avenger, and the month of April was henceforth called the month of Nero. In spite of all this sycophancy, we must acknowledge that although some of the victims were innocent, the conspirators were manifestly guilty, and their condemnation was legitimate.

The death of Poppaea, whom Nero wounded mortally in a frenzy of brutal anger, seemed to excite him to fresh cruelty.² He forbade Cassius to attend her obsequies, and shortly after banished



FRAGMENT OF A STATUE OF JUPITER.³

him. Silanus, accused of some unknown complicity with him, but in reality a victim to his own popularity and his descent from Augustus, was sent to Barium, where he soon witnessed the arrival of the customary executioners, — a centurion and soldiers. The centurion advised him to open his veins. Silanus, young and strong, replied angrily and, although unarmed, defended himself, and fell as if in battle, pierced with many blows, all of which were received with his face towards the enemy. Another tragedy soon followed.

¹ Tac., *Ann.* xv. 74.

² He would not allow her body to be burned according to the Roman custom, but ordered it to be buried in the tomb of Julius (Tac., *Ann.* xvi. 6).

■ Museum of the Louvre.

The ex-consul Antistius Vetus, father-in-law of Rubellius Plautus, one of Nero's earliest victims, was feared on account of this relationship. Accused by a person whom he had punished during his proconsulate in Asia, he withdrew to the town of Formiae and sent his daughter Pollitta to plead his cause with the Emperor. Pollitta had seen her husband slain in her presence; and before the murderers bore away his bleeding head she had kissed it for the last time, in token of undying love; she preserved his blood-stained garments as a widow and a mourner, says Tacitus, taking only food and drink sufficient to sustain her alive. Yielding to her father's entreaty, she set out for Naples; and as she was not admitted to the presence of Nero, she placed herself in his way, and cried to him to listen to the innocent and not to deliver an ex-consul, his former colleague, into the hands of a freedman. It was all in vain; and she returned to her father to make known to him that he was destined to die. Antistius Vetus scorned to stain his will with the name of his murderer. He called his slaves to him, distributed his money among them, and permitted them to carry away everything which they could, except three couches, which he reserved for the death-scene. This being done, he, with his mother-in-law and his daughter, opened their veins in the same room, with the same instrument, — three generations thus perishing at once under the same roof.¹

Fear is implacable, and Nero had been afraid. Accordingly, since the conspiracy of Piso one condemnation had followed another with fearful rapidity. Just now it was Antistius Vetus; again, it is the turn of Publius Anteius; the brave Marcus Ostorius Scapula, of whose strength even his murderers were afraid, but who offered his throat to them without resistance; Annaeus Mela, the father of Lucan; Anicius Cerialis, Rufrius Crispinus, former praetorian prefect; and Petronius, voluptuous and effeminate, who, playing with death, opened his veins, closed them again to open them anew, while songs and gay poetry were recited to him. Some of his slaves he rewarded, others he ordered to be punished; he walked and slept; and to end all, described in his will the most monstrous of Nero's debaucheries and sent it to him sealed (66). Like many of his day, he spent his life badly, but

¹ Tac., *Ann.* xvi. 10–12.

ended it bravely. This Stoic style of dying seemed to have become a sort of custom which every man who had any self-respect was bound to observe.

The most illustrious victim was Paetus Thrasea. "In killing him," said Tacitus, "Nero hoped to destroy virtue itself." He was



EPRIUS MARCELLUS, PROCONSUL.²

reproached with absenting himself from the Senate for three years, with never having sacrificed for the safety of the Emperor and for the preservation of his divine voice,¹ also with denying the divinity of Poppaea; his silence, his withdrawal from public affairs, were, it was said, an accusation against the Emperor and against himself: it was Cato alive again.³ We may indeed say that he was somewhat late with these scruples, after the Empire had raised him to the summit of honor, — him, a provincial of the city of Padua. And when as ex-consul he was summoned by Eprius Marcellus⁴ to appear in the curia, as pontifex to attend the public rites, as citizen to take the yearly oath of fidelity, and only made answer, "There is no longer a Senate, magistrates, laws, or even Rome," — we must admit that this behavior of so conspicuous a man, whose house was the rendezvous of the most distinguished citizens,⁵ was an encouragement to dangerous enterprises. But to live in retirement and rail against the government in the presence of the household gods was certainly a somewhat singular crime. Only a Nero could have commanded Thrasea to cease an opposition so discreetly maintained.

The first step was to forbid his presence at the festivals to be given upon the arrival of Tiridates in Rome. In a cool and dignified letter Thrasea simply asked of the Emperor that judges at least be granted to him. This was allowed; the Senate was convened. At daybreak, under pretence of protecting the Fathers against imaginary conspirators, the curia was surrounded by two praetorian cohorts fully armed, and by a multitude whose swords were seen beneath their togas, — men who were doubtless paid to act the part of the populace in this tragedy, and represent them

¹ Sacrifices were offered up if he had taken cold.

² Man standing, bearing a trident. Bronze coin struck at Cymae (*Cabinet de France*).

³ Thrasea wrote a life of Cato (Plutarch, *Cato*, 25, 37).

⁴ See Borghesi concerning Eprius Marcellus (*Œuvres*, iii. 285–293).

⁵ *Illustrium virorum feminarumque coetus frequentes* (Tac., *Ann.* xvi. 34).

ready to rush to the defence of Nero. The quaestor of the sovereign read an imperial message, in which, without naming individuals, Nero reproached the senators for abandoning their public duties, and by their indifference to the interest of the state affording a precedent to that of the equestrian order. The Senate understood the intimation conveyed, and the accusers were in readiness. There seems to have been no debate, and no one dared to appear in defence of Thræsea. The accused awaited the verdict of the Fathers in his own house. When informed of it, he prepared for death with firmness, but without ostentation; he made no studied harangues to his friends, but dismissed them, lest they also might be compromised, and persuaded his wife Arria to live for the sake of their daughter. When the veins of his arm were opened, he called to his side the quaestor who had brought the sentence, and said to him: "Look, young man. May the gods avert this omen! But you live in an age in which it is good to strengthen the soul by examples of courage."

Tacitus places the virtuous Barea Soranus beside Thræsea. As proconsul of Asia he had won the affection of that province by greatly enlarging the port of Ephesus and by refraining to punish the inhabitants of Pergamus for their resistance to one of the Emperor's freedmen who had undertaken to carry off their statues and pictures. This solicitude for his subjects appeared like a menace of revolt to the frantic master of the Empire. Still another grievance was found,—Servilia, the daughter of Soranus, had consulted the soothsayers concerning the issue of the suit against her father; she was implicated in the accusation, and appeared before the Senate. "Father and daughter stood before the consuls. The father was advanced in years; the daughter, barely twenty, already condemned to widowhood by the recent banishment of her husband, Annius Pollio, did not dare even to raise her eyes to Soranus, for fear of increasing his danger. Upon being interrogated by the accuser if she had not sold her necklace and wedding presents that she might use the money for purposes of magic, she threw herself upon the ground and wept long in silence; at last, embracing the altars, 'No,' she said, 'I invoked no false gods, I uttered no imprecations; my wretched petitions had no other object but to obtain from you, Caesar, and from you,

senators, the safety of the best of fathers. I did give to those men my jewels, my garments, and the ornaments befitting my rank; I would willingly have given them my blood and my life, had they required it. I cannot answer for them; they were unknown to me, nor do I know who they are, nor the arts they practise: for my own part, I have never spoken of the Emperor but as I speak of the gods. If I am guilty, I alone am guilty, and my unhappy father was ignorant of my misdeeds.'

"Soranus would not allow her to finish. He exclaimed that his daughter had not accompanied him to Asia; that she had not been implicated in the accusation against her husband; that her only crime was too great affection for himself: and he besought his judges not to involve her in his fate, professing willingness to suffer anything himself if she were saved." The appeal was in vain; both father and daughter were condemned, the sole favor shown them being that they were allowed to choose the method of death.

Each of the accusers of Thrasea obtained a recompense of five million sesterces; those of Soranus only one million two hundred thousand: but in addition they received the ornaments of the quaestorship. The profession of informer had become the most lucrative of trades.¹

Tacitus grows weary of recounting deaths like these; and however much he honors the memory of these victims, he cannot now and then refrain from letting the words "servile patience" and "cowardly resignation"² escape his lips. And truly, although these men possessed the courage to die without weakness, they had not the courage to struggle to save themselves and the Empire by desperate devotion. While civil war was going on in the Senate, despite a natural reluctance, a man might be of the party of those who, upon the Palatine, were seeking to defend the cause of order and of the future. But now for a second time the imperial power was drifting into the maddest cruelty, and a crowned mountebank could not live without adding daily murder

¹ Paconius, Agrippinus, and Helvidius Priscus were banished, and Montanus was declared unworthy to hold public office, etc.

² *Patientia servilis . . . tam segniter pereuntes . . . ignavia per silentium pereuntium* (Ann. xvi. 16, 25). He had before spoken in the *Life of Agricola* (42) of those dramatic death-scenes as alike ambitious and useless: *in nullum reipublicae usum ambitiosa morte inclaruerunt*.

to his orgies. Like a wild beast, he kills for the pleasure of killing, and will surely be struck down; for in political, even more than in private life, punishment follows great criminals, and almost always comes in time to smite them.

The vengeance drawing near was in the form of civil war, to be followed by military usurpation; the existing scourge was to be destroyed by another, which plunged the Empire into sanguinary tumult, to end in yet another form of tyranny. Was there nothing to save the world from this twofold evil? In the lack of those institutions whose absence we have deplored, certain forms of human character are enough to conjure many perils; and we have just seen that Rome was not destitute of men whose names we mention with respect. Many even were disciples of a doctrine,—that of the Porch,—which was one of the noblest efforts of the human intellect. Without examining here its philosophic value, we certainly have a right to ask, in face of all this infamy, what it might have prevented if it had known how to make citizens as well as men.

The grandeur which remained in the souls of a few men has been attributed to the Stoic philosophy. It was not useless to them, certainly, for it sustained them with a firm consciousness of the dignity of man,—a strong foundation, on which it was possible to build solidly, while yet alone it was not enough to bear the entire weight of life. The old Rome was not so entirely destroyed that the ancient courage did not re-appear from time to time in the new Rome, like an inheritance from past generations; and as every one at that time interested himself in philosophy, those who held to the old ideas naturally turned to the teachings of Zeno, which were for the few, and whose stern form suited well their aristocratic virtue.

“In the Roman world,” said Hegel, “Stoicism was at home.” Even in the herd of Epicurus were those who knew how to die as well as Thrasea. We saw how lightly a voluptuary could play with death. Another was told that the Senate was about to decide his fate: “Well, let them do it; I am on my way to the bath, for it is my hour.” Upon his return he learned that he was condemned: “To what,—exile, or death?” “To exile.” “Will my property be confiscated?” “No.” “Very good, then! We can

sup as well at Aricia as at Rome.”¹ I am willing that all those Romans who were unstained by the general corruption of the time should be enrolled under the standard of the Porch; but it must be admitted that however honorable this philosophy was to those who put it into practice, it had no power with the masses; and it is by this character of general fruitfulness and ardent proselytism that the social value of doctrines may be recognized. What influence could be exerted in the state by men who aimed at the impossible in virtue, as did Nero in vice; who strove to mutilate the very nature of man by completely suppressing his passions, in order that the wise man might be unmoved by all things, even by fame itself; who, professing to have need neither of things nor persons, pitied the anxieties of others endeavoring to improve their condition, and exclaimed with Apollonius, “I care not for public affairs, since I only live in the divine;”² or whose virtuous platitudes recall the sentimental denunciations of Rousseau and his school? “Great Father of the Gods!” says Persius, “punish thou tyrants no otherwise than thus: let them behold the virtue they have abandoned, and pine away at the loss of her!”³ I can imagine that Nero, reading these lines in company with his friends Tigellinus and Sporus, must have been amused at the simplicity of the Stoic poet, but that also it irritated him to meet, in the height of his gayety, these men with their pale, sober faces, who conversed of death only, as if it were impossible to live with honor during his reign. The haughty egotism of the sect was moreover strengthened by that belief in fate⁴ which, according to the condition of the mind, compels either to stupid resignation or to violent action; between these two the Roman Stoics chose the silent protest and the dignity of the dying hour. They made a solitude for themselves in the midst of the world, and lived for themselves alone, absorbed in their own personal affairs, without rising to considerations of the general good: they are the hermits of paganism.

¹ Arrian, *Epict.* i. 1.

² Philostratus, *Vita Apoll.* v. 35. See Martha (*Lucretius*, p. 200) upon the indifference of the Stoics to politics.

³ *Sat.* iii. 35–38.

⁴ *Fata nos ducunt et quantum cuique restat, prima nascentium hora disposuit . . . privata ac publica longus ordo rerum trahit . . . olim constitutum est quid gaudeas, quid fleas* (*Sen., De Prov.* 5).

⁵ *Id. ad Marc.* 10. [It should be noted that this was far from being the theory of the

"Abstain and endure," was their maxim. The master of Epicetetus strikes him violently on the leg: "Take care, you will break it." The blow is repeated, and the bone breaks: "I told you so." Such was their stubborn and inactive wisdom. In political affairs wisdom of this sort made malecontents who frowned at the Emperor; it neither made men of action nor good counsellors.¹ Thus the Stoics allowed tyrants to strike as they chose, and believed that their duty was fulfilled when they suffered torture unmoved, flinging to the lictors or to adverse fate the saying of Seneca: "Against the outrages of life I have the refuge of death." But true courage consists in taking part in the struggle, and not in sitting alone, even for the sake of a glorious death. If they had been less satisfied with their negative virtue, they might have aroused the public mind and prevented the Senate from giving to the world the unwholesome spectacle of the deepest degradation into which a political assembly ever fell. The disturbance made by the people against Poppaea in favor of Octavia proves that even in the Roman populace all feeling of justice was not extinct, and that there still remained something to which the resolute and courageous man could appeal.

By its doctrine of non-interference Stoicism, so thoroughly Roman in many respects, was nevertheless in direct contradiction to the spirit of ancient Rome, where during six centuries the word virtue signified devotion to the state. It will be remembered that before this, at the decline of the Republic, the sect of Epicurus withdrew the wise man from public affairs;² thus the two schools which held the greatest influence over Roman thought were rather an encouragement than a restraint to tyranny,—one by its indifference, the other by its resignation; so that the despotism of the Empire was no more restrained by ideas than it was by institutions.

It must also be borne in mind that despotism had been until this time insupportable only to the members of the senatorial

founders of the sect, who thought the wise man should contribute actively to the public good. Cf. Diog. Laert., VII. i. 123-124. — ED.].

¹ Seneca attempts (*De Clem.* ii. 5) to exculpate Stoicism from being *minime principibus regibusque bonum datura consilium*. Tigellinus represented to Nero *Stoicorum arrogantia quae turbidos et negotiorum appetentes faciat* (Tac., *Ann.* xiv. 57).

² See Vol. II. p. 271.

aristocracy. Outside Rome, in Italy or the provinces, there had been no rumor of conspiracy or of opposition, nor was there perceived the shadow of desire for change. Cities and nations found, in the interest of the sovereign himself, guaranties which had always proved sufficiently strong against the excesses of their governors, and in their municipal liberties the independence necessary for their pride and the management of their affairs.

V. — VINDEX.

THE time had now come when Nero was to add blunders to his crimes, and to give cause of anxiety to those who had before been undisturbed. Intoxicated with power by the very abuse



COIN OF
CORBULO.²

that he made of it, he imagined it absolutely secure, and shrank from no imprudence. He insulted his generals by subjecting the most distinguished of them to the control of his freedmen,¹ and he deprived the armies of their favorite and successful leaders.

Suetonius Paulinus, the conqueror of the Moors and the Britons, suffered disgrace, and Plautius Silvanus, the able commander of Moesia, was left forgotten without honors at his post. Two brothers of the ancient Scribonian family, Rufus and Proculus, were in command of the armies of Upper and Lower Germany; being recalled, under pretext of a consultation with the Emperor concerning the welfare of their provinces, they met the order of death on their way. The same was the fate of Domitius Corbulo, the greatest general of his time. He was summoned into Greece, and had hardly set foot in the port of Cenchreae, when he was surrounded by the agents of the imperial displeasure; he fell upon his sword, saying, "I have deserved it." Was this regret at having served such a man, or at not having overthrown him (67)?³ When the generals perceived the fate of

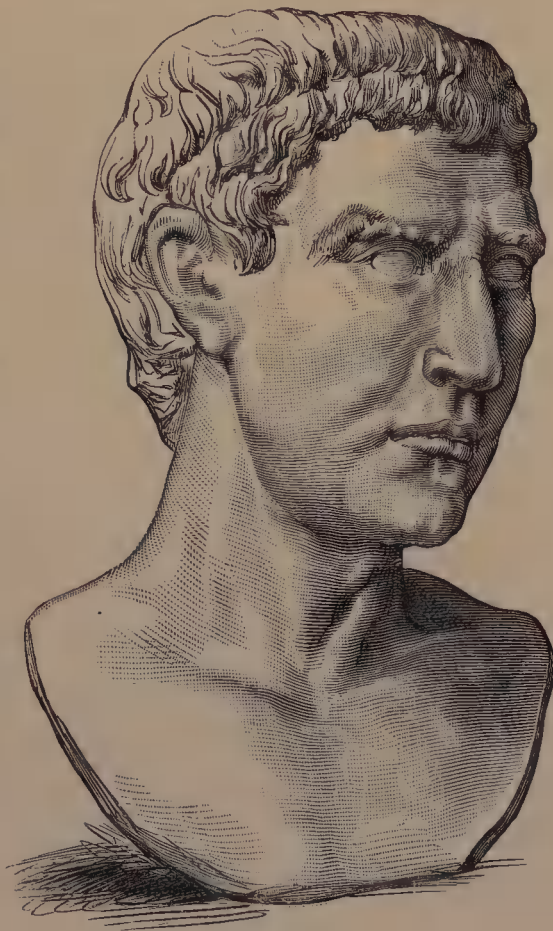
¹ Tac., *Ann.* xiv. 39.

² Cybele standing between two lions. Bronze coin of Corbulo, proconsul, struck at Docimaea: ANΘΥΠΑΤΟΣ.

³ He was accused by one of his officers, Arrius Varus (Tac., *Hist.* iii. 6). Dion (lxii. 19) says that many were ready to declare him emperor, and Suetonius (*Nero*, 36) that Annianus Vinicianus, son-in-law of Corbulo, headed a conspiracy, prepared and revealed at Beneventum. Aur. Victor (*De Caes.* 5) speaks also of many plots, and Henzen (*Scavi*, pp. 21-22) quotes these

the most illustrious of their number, each one felt himself threatened; and some of them, like Galba, made preparations for the inevitable crisis which was near at hand.

Nero alienated both the soldiers and the inhabitants of the provinces. The armies were causes of expense, and the provinces furnished money to maintain in his finances the equilibrium which his prodigalities disturbed; he ceased to pay the former, and he overtaxed the latter. The pay of the troops was in arrear, and the gifts to veterans were postponed. Dion affirms that he even suppressed the distribution of corn in Rome;¹ and we know that the revolt in Britain was caused by exorbitant taxation. To the proceeds of the taxes he added still other gains; his demands after the conflagration of Rome have been already described. He constantly invented new resources. He shared with those who took bribes, and permitted pillage on condition of having his part of the spoils, and appointed no one to office without adding, "You know what I must have." Or else, "See that you leave nothing for any one."³ And as he had persecuted those generals whom the soldiers loved, he condemned those governors who were beloved in the provinces, for example; Barea Soranus, the proconsul

CORBULO.²

words from the Arval tables for the year 66: . . . *ob detecta nefariorum consilia, providentiae reddito sacrificio*. It must be borne in mind, however, that nothing is positively known concerning the conspiracy of Vinicianus, nor of its relation to the death of Corbulo.

¹ Suet., *Nero*, 32; Dion, lxi. 18.

² Bust in the Museum of the Louvre, found at Gabii in an aediculum dedicated to the ancestors of the Empress Domitia Longina, wife of Domitian and daughter of Corbulo.

³ *Hoc agamus ne quis quicquam habeat* (Suet., *Nero*, 32).

of Asia, who perished in 65,—a victim to his own integrity, his ability, and the affection which the people of Pergamus and of Ephesus bore towards him. It is a favorite theory to attribute revolutions to the fickleness of the populace; but how many governments have dug with their own hands the abysses into which they have disappeared!



BAS-RELIEF OF PERGAMUS.¹

An event of the year 63 was the arrival of Tiridates, the brother of the King of Parthia. Three thousand Parthian knights and a numerous Roman escort formed an army to attend him. Thus accompanied, he traversed Asia, Thrace, Greece, and Illyria, prolonging the journey from a superstitious dread of the sea,² ruining, as he passed, those cities to whom the honor of seeing an Armenian king within their walls cost in one day many years of their revenue.³ Tiridates finally crossed the Adriatic,

¹ Fragment of the "Battle of the Giants," found in the recent excavations, and now at Berlin.

² According to the doctrine of the magicians, salt water is unclean (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxx. 17). He returned, however, by way of Brundisium and Dyrrachium.

³ Suetonius (*Nero*, 30) says that the expenses were over eight hundred thousand sesterces a day, which makes for all this journey, coming and going, during nine months, a total expen-

landed in Italy, and presented himself before Nero, who was awaiting him at Naples. A precaution taken at this interview recalls a custom of the Middle Ages. The Arsacid was not required to deliver up his sword, but it had been nailed in the scabbard. Great festivities were held at Naples, and also games, in which Tiridates proved his skill in archery.¹

Nero was eager to show to the Romans, in the position of a dependent, this son and brother of a prince who called himself the king of kings; he therefore returned to Rome, bringing his guest with him. The praetorian guard surrounded the Forum; the Emperor himself sat upon the rostra in a curule chair, in triumphal costume and surrounded by military standards. Tiridates ascended the steps of the rostra and knelt before Nero, who took off his tiara and fastened a diadem



MOUNTED ARCHER, FROM THE ANTONINE COLUMN.

upon his head, while an ex-praetor explained the ceremony to the people and interpreted to them the Parthian's petition. Nero was saluted with the title of imperator, and took occasion, as after a great and decisive victory, to close the temple of Janus (66 A. D.)²

This festival, peaceful in character but warlike in its aspect, revived Nero's dreams of military glory and conquest. He thought of an expedition into Ethiopia in search of the sources of the Nile, of a war against the Parthians for the sake of rivalling the

diture of about two hundred million sesterces. At his departure Nero presented him with a hundred million sesterces, according to Suetonius; fifty million drachmas, according to Dion (lxiii. 6).

¹ Dion, lxiii. 7; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxx. 6.

² Suet., *Nero*, 13. Tacitus does not seem to have been aware of this closing of the temple of Janus; but the information given by Suetonius is confirmed by coins (cf. Eckhel and Cohen).

glory of Alexander, or one against the Albanians to force the passes of the Caucasus, which no Roman general had as yet penetrated.¹ Thus his surfeited imagination tormented itself, his spirit hungered for the marvellous, because he could hope for no new sensation, except in the search for the unknown and the impossible.² Some time before this he had believed that the treasures of Dido were hidden in Africa, and had ransacked the entire province to find them. He studied magic with enthusiasm; and when Tiridates arrived with his Chaldaeans he begged them to reveal their secrets to him. Finding them only empty nothingness, he devoted himself afresh to those works which the hand could accomplish and the eye could see. Recently he had proposed to cut a canal across the



TEMPLE OF JANUS
CLOSED.³

Isthmus of Corinth; now he asks himself which extremity of the world, the region where the fires of Sirius burn, or the icy domain of the Great Bear, shall behold his victorious eagles? He had already sent agents to visit the Caucasus, and two of his centurions had penetrated to the foot of those inaccessible rocks where the Nile plunges downwards into vast marshes.⁴ He himself still remains in Rome merely for the purpose of organizing his armies; the legions of Illyria, of Germany, and of Britain furnish their choicest men. Even Italy awakes at the sound of this martial zeal, and gives to its Emperor a legion, every one of whose soldiers is six feet in height; he calls it the phalanx of Alexander the Great.

The Emperor set out; but his army bore neither spear nor buckler: harps take the place of swords, and for helmets there are theatrical masks. It is an army of comedians accompanying their leader, and Greece is to be the theatre of their exploits. The Emperor took part in all the games, and also in the musical contests

¹ Tac., *Hist.* i. 6.

² Tacitus calls him: *Incredibilium cupitor* (*Ann.* xv. 42).

³ Reverse of a large bronze coin of Nero, with the inscription: "Having re-established peace on sea and land, he closed the temple of Janus."

⁴ Cf. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* vi. 13; Dion, *lxxiii.* 8; Tac., *Hist.* i. 6; Sen., *Quaest. Nat.* vi. 8. His description of these marshes, which he gathered from the accounts of one of the centurions in answer to his inquiries, remains correct at the present time. Nero had also sent a Roman knight, for a commercial purpose, to the coasts of the North Sea and the Baltic to buy up all the amber which could be found there (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxxvii. 11).

and the chariot-races (A. D. 67). He chanced to fall in the midst of the Olympic stadium; but what matter? The Greeks denied him neither triumphs nor applause. They awarded him eighteen hundred crowns, and destroyed in his presence the statues of former victors. Sometimes he himself destroyed his competitors. An actor at Corinth dared to dispute with him the attention of the public and the prize for singing; Nero ordered him to be strangled in the open theatre. Victories like these in the very land of art and taste delighted him greatly, and he wished to pay for them royally; like Flamininus, he declared the freedom of Greece, and with his own "divine voice" read, during the Isthmian games at Corinth, that decree which Flamininus had proclaimed by the voice of a herald. He promised the Greeks a still greater service, — he undertook to pierce the Isthmus of Corinth. His praetorian soldiers, at the signal of a trumpet, struck the soil; with a golden pickaxe the Emperor loosened a few shovelfuls of earth, which he bore away in triumph. From all the islands the banished were called together, and convicts were gathered from every province; Vespasian sent six thousand Jewish prisoners to him. All death penalties were abrogated until the completion of the work.¹



BUST OF NERO, CROWNED (NAPLES MUSEUM).

¹ This was the law in force concerning his canal from Misenum to Rome, which would

But he soon grew weary of such activity; he consented that the canal be proclaimed an impossibility, and returned to his games



DANCER ON A BRONZE LAMP.²

and his festivities,—intermingled with executions; at this time occurred the death of Corbulo. The matricide did not dare to be present at the Eleusinian mysteries, whence all blasphemers and criminals were excluded by the herald.¹ The Pythian oracles must have given him an unfavorable response, for he ordered a number of men to be massacred at Delphi, and their bodies to be thrown into the cave whence issued the prophetic vapor.³

Apollo made haste to be reconciled to one who so maltreated his divinity, and an oracle which conformed to the Emperor's wishes obtained for the Pythia a gift of a hundred thousand drachmas.⁴ In that, as in every other age, men were to be found who were both impious and superstitious, who by turns scourged and worshipped their gods. Nero, a sceptic and a devotee, would have played to the life that character of Comedy who has his thunderbolt repaired by a neighboring tinker, then shakes with fear at the formidable noise made by his mended machine. The Emperor's sacrifices in the temples did not prevent him from pillaging them. He carried away five hundred



MEDAL COMMEMORATING THE VOYAGE OF NERO TO GREECE.⁵

have killed all the workmen in a different way, since it crossed the Pontine Marshes. [The work done by Nero at the isthmus was still traceable when it was resumed in 1884 by the Greek Government. — ED.]

¹ Suet., *Nero*, 34.

² Found at Pompeii (Naples Museum).

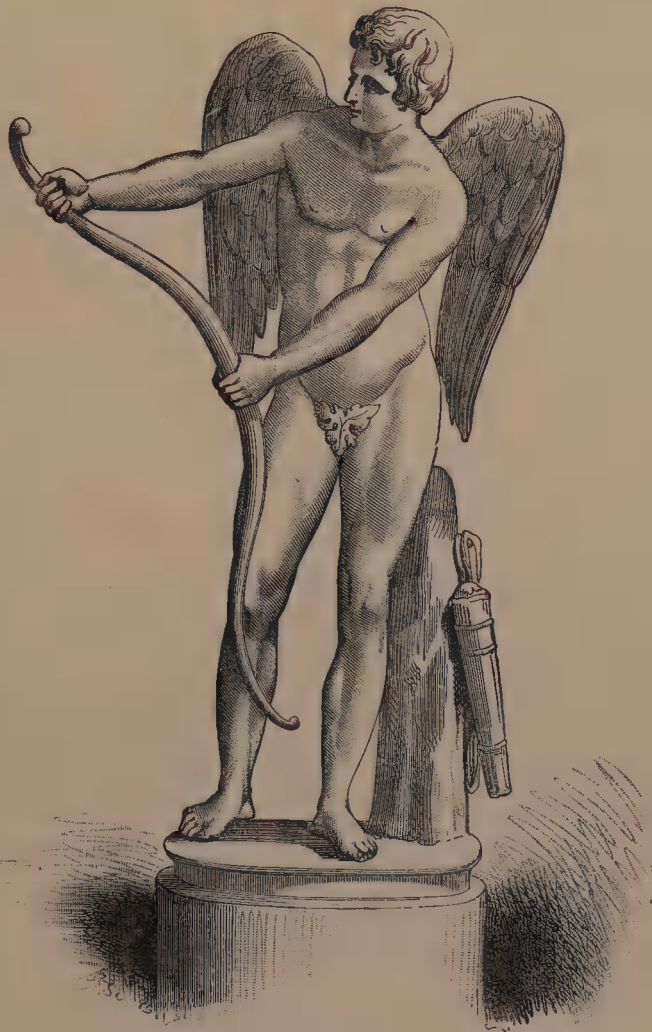
■ Dion, lxiii. 14, and *Nero, or the Piercing of the Isthmus*, a dialogue attributed to Lucian.

⁴ Pausanias, x. 7, and v. 26.

⁵ Galley, with the inscription, "Arrival of Augustus." Small bronze.

statues from Delphi, and others from Olympia, and forced the Thespians to give up to him the Eros of Praxiteles.¹ To make good the loss of works of art destroyed by the fire in Rome in 67, he renewed the robberies of the first conquerors of Greece.

One of his freedmen, however, was continually writing to him from Rome that public affairs imperatively demanded his presence. "Be convinced first of all," was the reply, "and repeat to me, that I must only return worthy of Nero." Upon his return he entered Naples, the theatre of his early artistic successes, in a chariot drawn by white horses, and, after the privilege of the victors in the sacred games, through a breach made in the walls. It was the same at Antium, at Albanum, and at Rome. The Romans beheld him enter in the same car which was used in the triumph of Augustus, wearing a purple robe

EROS.²

with a chlamys strewn with golden stars, wearing the Olympic wreath upon his head, and bearing the Pythian in his right hand. Before him also were solemnly carried others which he had gained, bearing inscriptions signifying where they had been won, from whom, in what plays, and in what parts. Behind the chariot

¹ Pausanias, ix. 27.

² From the Museum of the Louvre. There are several replicas of the Eros of the Louvre, — one at Dresden, at Rome, at the British Museum, etc., and it is probably a copy of the celebrated statue of Praxiteles. Many engraved gems represent Love in the same attitude (Clarac, *Musée de Sculpt.*, pl. 282, No. 1,488).

pressed the crowd of hired applauders, shouting, as if in an ovation, that they were companions in his glory and soldiers of his triumph. An arcade of the Circus Maximus was torn down to admit the procession, and the Emperor directed his course through the Velabrum and the Forum towards the Palatine Hill and the Temple of Apollo. Victims were sacrificed everywhere along his course, the streets were strewn with saffron powder, and birds, ribbons, and cakes were scattered along the way. He hung the sacred wreaths in his bedrooms, filled his apartments with statues of himself represented as a musician, and caused a medal to be struck representing himself attired in the same costume. In order to preserve his voice he addressed the soldiers by proxy, and kept his singing-master continually with him, who advised him as to the care of his lungs and recommended him to keep a piece of linen over his mouth.¹

The freedman who had implored his master to return to Rome was right. The Empire had grown weary of obeying a "bad singer," as Vindex called Nero. A threatening agitation was astir in the army and in the provinces. The Jews were in open revolt, and it had been necessary to send out a large force against them. The Greek-speaking nations, long accustomed to despotism and to admire in silence the extravagances of their kings, gave no sign of discontent. The gift of liberty recently bestowed upon Achaia appeared to them of good omen; even Plutarch, half a century later, mentions it with gratitude. Nero the singer and musician, the friend of actors and athletes, the poet and charioteer in the stadium, pleased them better than a serious, economical, and strict emperor. But through the West, where mythological traditions and Greek manners had no influence, there was only contempt for the imperial mountebank, to whom anything would have been forgiven sooner than the abandonment of national customs. If Roman gravity was lenient towards crime and vice, it demanded at least the guise of respect. In Lusitania, Otho, the former husband of Poppaea, for ten years had been awaiting his hour of vengeance. The governor of Baetica listened to the warnings of Apollonius against the enemy of philosophers,² and

¹ Suet., *Nero*, 25.

² Unless Philostratus (*Apoll.* v. 10), in confounding men and places, meant to speak of Galba.

Galba, a kinsman of Livia, had become popular in Tarraconensis by hindering the revenue-farmers in their exactions. In his praetorian cohort men talked openly concerning the Senate and the Republic, and he himself, who had refused the Empire upon the death of Caius, twenty-six years before, now grown bolder with age, as having less to risk, sought out all the oracles concerning an emperor who was to come from Spain; he carefully collected the portraits of the senators whom Nero had put to death, and maintained secret relations with those who had been banished to the Balearic Islands. In the provinces of Gaul a new census, and afterwards the tribute exacted for the reconstruction of Rome, had caused great discontent. These provinces, so near to Italy, could almost see and hear the strange saturnalia of which Rome was the theatre. They had too recently become sharers of the Roman civilization, and had as yet too much of the Gallic nature left, not to be shocked at the shameless vices which Nero

ACTOR, WEARING A MASK.¹

paraded with such impunity upon the banks of the Tiber. Always eager for news, they were sure to hear of the infamous scenes of the House of Gold or the Neronian Games;² and travellers from Rome would tell them: "I saw your Emperor acting on the stage, in company with other actors, with the cithera and the cothurnus, in buskin and mask. I saw him, bound with cords and laden with

¹ Albani Villa, Rome.² Suet., *Galba*.

chains, raving in the madness of Orestes or shrieking as Canace in the pangs of childbirth.”¹ At tales like these their untamed souls would rise, and they were indignant at obeying such a master, half woman and half buffoon.

Among those who brought back from Rome the deepest scorn and anger was the Aquitanian Julius Vindex, of royal blood, and at that time governor of Lugdunensis. He opened his heart to the Sequani, the Aedui, and the Arverni, and persuaded them to revolt against Nero. If in their discussions there was much said concerning the vices of the Emperor, without doubt there were some present who spoke concerning the objectionable features of the Empire,² and were becoming accustomed to that idea of separation which a year afterwards had entered into many minds. Vindex, in spite of his Gallic origin, had become too much a Roman to conceive anything beyond a change of administration or sovereign; his whole conduct shows this: he made his followers swear to be faithful to the Senate and to the Roman people. But he would not have found so many Gauls ready to fight, if to their scorn of Nero had not been added secret hopes. The battle of Veson-tium, where the armies of Gaul and of Rome rushed furiously against each other, proves that Vindex, whether he wished it or not, was at the head of a national movement, and that the legions of Verginius Rufus, composed entirely of Romans, believed that in the slaughter of twenty thousand Gauls they were making an end of a rebellion against the Empire.

Before beginning his undertaking, Vindex wrote to several of the governors of the western provinces to obtain their support; among the rest, to Galba, who made no reply, but became a sharer in the rebellion by omitting to forward, like the rest, his despatches to Nero. Consequently, after Vindex had gathered a numerous army of volunteers, he addressed himself a second time to Galba. “There is still time,” he wrote; “come, make yourself leader of this powerful body of Gauls. We have already a hundred thousand men, and we shall arm still more.” Galba received

¹ Suet., *Nero*, 27–29, and Dion, lxxiii. 22.

² See in Tacitus (*Hist.* iv. 14) the speech of Civilis, in which these significant words appear: *Gallias idem cupientes*; and also that of Vocula (*ibid.* 57), giving the same name to the revolt of Sacrovir and that of Vindex. Plutarch (*Galba*) describes the whole of Gaul as involved in the movement and inclined to revolt, even after the death of Nero.

this letter in Carthagera, and at the same time a message from the governor of Aquitania, who appealed for aid against the Gauls. He hesitated no longer, for he had just intercepted the order for his own execution sent by Nero to the procurators¹ (April 2, 68). He raised a legion in his own province, and thus became master of two, created a sort of senate by convening the chief men of the country, and issued proclamations against the common enemy; while Otho, the governor of Lusitania, sent him a large amount of gold and silver plate to be coined into money.

"Nero was in Naples when he heard of the rising of the Gauls: it was on the anniversary of his mother's murder (March 19, 68). He received the news with so much indifference that he was suspected of rejoicing at an opportunity, through the right of war, to pillage the richest provinces of the Empire. He went to the gymnasium, witnessed the combats of the athletes, and took great interest in their exercises. During supper the most alarming despatches were brought to him; then only did he break forth against the rebels in threats and curses. He waited eight days, however, before replying to a single letter or giving any order; meantime he did not allude to the event, and it seemed to have passed out of his memory.

"Disturbed at last by the frequent and insulting proclamations of Vindex, he wrote to the Senate, exhorting them to avenge their Emperor and the Republic, excusing himself on account of a sore throat from coming to the curia in person. Nothing offended him more in these manifestoes of the rebels than to be spoken of as a bad singer. As for the other accusations, said he, their falsehood was well proved by the taunt which had been flung at him, of ignorance in respect to that art which he had cultivated with so much zeal and success; and he went about asking everybody if a greater artist than himself had ever been known. Still the bearers of evil tidings kept coming; at last, seized with affright, he started for Rome. On the way an insignificant omen raised his courage; it was the bas-relief of a monument representing a Roman horseman dragging a conquered Gaul by the hair. At this sight he leaped for joy and gave thanks to Heaven. At

¹ Suet., *Galba*, 9, and Aurelius Victor, *De Caes.* 5. Unless he had forged this order in justification of his revolt.

Rome he neither assembled the Senate nor the people, but hastily held counsel with a few of the principal citizens whom he had called together at his house, and spent the rest of the day in trying new musical instruments in their presence. He called attention to the mechanism and workmanship of each, saying that he should use them upon the stage, provided Vindex would give him leave.

“When he learned that Galba and the Spaniards had also revolted, he lost courage entirely; and falling to the ground, remained there a long time like one half dead. It has been said that at the first news of the rebellion it was his design to kill the governors of the provinces and the commanders of the armies, and leave the pillage of Gaul to the soldiery; to slay all the exiles and Gauls in the capital; to poison the Senate at a banquet; to set fire to Rome, and in the midst of it to let the wild beasts loose upon the people, that they might not be able to protect themselves from the flames. As the impossibility of executing these projects compelled him to relinquish them, he at last decided to fight; but without any preparation for so important an expedition, for the most contrary feelings rapidly succeeded each other in this variable nature, at the same time savage and effeminate. His first idea was to kill, afterwards to expel, the consuls, to bear the fasces himself, and to cross the Alps. He had put a price upon the head of Vindex, offering a reward of two million five hundred thousand drachmas for his murder; to which the latter made answer: ‘If the head of Nero be brought to me, I will give mine in exchange.’ At other times he spoke of the influence his name, his face, and his tears would have upon the rebels. ‘I will go,’ he said, ‘and show myself unarmed to the disobedient legions. My sorrow will bring them to repentance, and we shall thunder forth together a pæan of victory. I will compose it now.’”¹

An unforeseen event seemed at first to avert the danger. Lyons, recently aided by Nero, took his part. That alone would have been sufficient reason for the neighboring Viennese to join the opposite party, since they had long been jealous of the colony

¹ I cannot say whether there is not more of caricature than history in this narrative of Suetonius. As anything might be expected of Nero, so anything might be said concerning him.

of Plancus, upon which all the imperial favor had been showered. They already held the city in a state of siege; and Lyons, still further menaced by the Aedui and Sequani, allies of Vindex, called the legions of Upper Germany to her aid.

At their head was a soldier of fortune, Verginius Rufus, brave, capable, and without ambition. Intensely disgusted with the contemptible life of Nero, he still believed in the Senate, the Roman people, and the law. He was alarmed at the idea of the evils that would fall upon the Empire if the provinces and the armies should discover that an emperor could be created outside of Rome. Belgica — which, though not strongly attached to Nero, perceived with regret that Central Gaul assumed the right to give a ruler to the world — remained quiet. Verginius, having nothing to dread on that side, invaded the country of the Sequani and threatened Besançon. Vindex, hastening up to defend that city, proposed a conference. The two generals consulted long together; and since both were without selfish designs and both despised Nero, they soon came to an agreement in favor of a restoration of the Republic. But the legionaries, who counted upon the spoils of the revolted cities, and to whom the once venerated names of Senate and people signified nothing, in spite of their leaders fell upon the Gauls, whom they held in great scorn, and twenty thousand perished. Vindex, in despair, put an end to his life. This victory gave no advantage to Nero, for the successful legions tore down his statues and proposed to proclaim Verginius. Disregarding their menaces, he refused to accept the supreme power; and he had the strength and the skill to control them until the arrival of certain news from Rome.

Great was the confusion there, and the Empire seemed to be on the verge of dissolution; the principle which had been up to this time the safeguard of its unity and life was about to fail, — the legitimacy of the natural or adopted family of Augustus. Of the hundred and eight persons who composed this family, thirty-nine (that is to say, more than a third) had perished by violent deaths, — a characteristic of an age when, as at Oriental courts, those who stand nearest the throne are also the most exposed to danger. Nero was the last of this race; it would end with him: and as nothing had been provided in respect to the succession,

there was no provincial governor so petty, no general so insignificant, that he might not dream of founding a new dynasty. In Lower Germany Fonteius Capito incited his legions equally against Nero and against Galba. An accused person appealing from his sentence to the Emperor, the general ordered a higher seat to be brought in; then, seating himself on it, said: "Speak; you are now in the presence of the Emperor;" and condemned him to death.



LEGIONARY BEARING THE IMAGE
(IMAGINARIUS). (FROM TRAJAN'S
COLUMN.)

Claudius Macer, in Africa, resigning the imperial title of *legatus Augusti*, assumed the republican name of *propraetor* and stopped all provisions on the way to Rome, — not so much with the idea of a re-establishment of the Republic, as in the hope that the people would give the imperial power to him who should bring the famine to an end. Otho, in Lusitania, sustained Galba, who might in the future open the way to power. The legions of Illyria sent a deputation to Verginius to offer to him their allegiance; and if the army of the East did not declare itself, it was because it had on hand a most perplexing war. But the example set on every side was not lost upon it, and ere long it also remembered that the power of making emperors was not inherent in Rome only.¹

Famine now threatened the capital itself.² A ship arrived from Egypt.

It was believed to be loaded with corn, and the forerunner of a corn-bearing fleet; instead of which its cargo was of fine sand from the Nile for the circus of the imperial palace! Anger and disgust took possession of the populace. Only the soldiers remained faithful. One of the praetorian prefects, Tigellinus,

¹ *Evulgato imperii arcano, posse principem alibi quam Romae fieri* (Tac., *Hist.* i. 4).

² When the first corn-vessels which Vespasian sent from Alexandria arrived, there was only corn enough left in Rome to last ten days.

made terms secretly with a friend of Galba; the other, Nymphidius Sabinus, believed that in the midst of this strange disorder he could make his way into the palace of the Caesars. He dared not ask the supreme power for himself as yet; but taking advantage of the ill-will of the praetorians towards Nero on account of his partiality for his German guard, he persuaded them that the Emperor had fled: and to make the government of Galba an impossibility beforehand, he promised them in the latter's name thirty thousand sesterces each,—a gratuity which the economical old man neither could nor would pay. He then intended to come forward himself, and believed that he should be able to buy the Empire without difficulty. Thus fifty-four years after the death of Augustus his empire was put up for auction.

The provinces and the armies, then, were in a state of insurrection; the Roman people in their hunger were threatening; and the praetorian guard were led away by a go-between who was only waiting his opportunity to act in his own interest. In this anarchy of opposing ambitions, the old name, the ancient right a thousand times violated but still in force, made the Senate, if not the actual, at least the apparent, master of the situation. It was the Senate to whom Verginius appealed, and whose lieutenant Galba called himself. Unaccustomed as were the senators to act with resolution, the gravity of the situation was soon to arouse them from their torpor.



GALLEY, UPON
A SILVER COIN
OF CLAUDIUS
MACER,
PROPRÆTOR
OF AFRICA.

But what, meanwhile, was Nero doing? He beheld men disputing for the Empire while he himself was yet alive. "No other Caesar was ever so unfortunate," he said plaintively,—a fate, however, which he richly merited. He formed the design of escaping into Egypt, of taking shelter among the Parthians, or even of throwing himself upon the mercy of Galba. He endeavored to persuade some centurions and tribunes to share his flight, and appeared not to understand when one of them repeated to him the lines from Vergil: "Is it then so hard to die?" Every one abandoned him; the imperial palace became a solitude: and Nero, deserted even by his guard, called in vain for a gladiator to put him to death. No one answered. He was alone; alone with his crimes, his fears, and his baseness,—an agony more

terrible than the violent death of others, because the soul soars higher and gains new strength for the last scene in the sight of the people. One of his freedmen, Phaon, took pity upon him and offered him his villa, four miles from Rome; and when night came he left the palace. Emboldened by news of this, the consuls—one of whom was Silius Italicus, author of a poem on the Second Punic War—convoked the Senate, announced the flight of the Emperor, and proposed that he be proclaimed a public enemy. The Fathers, pleased that they were able to dare everything and yet risk nothing, used the prerogative which was readily granted them to dispose of the Empire, and pronounced in favor of that candidate whose chances of success seemed greatest,—“the choice of Vindex.”

Meanwhile Nero fled. He had left the palace on horseback, barefooted and clothed in a tunic, an old cloak thrown over his shoulders, his head covered and face hidden by a handkerchief, with only four attendants. As he was passing by the praetorian camp he heard the shouts of the soldiers, who were uttering curses against him



COIN OF SILIUS
ITALICUS.¹

and good wishes for Galba. A passer-by said as he saw the little band, “Those men are in pursuit of the tyrant;” and another asked, “What news of Nero?” The sight of a dead body lying in the road made his horse rear, and the handkerchief fell which covered his face; an old praetorian recognized him and saluted him by name. Reaching a cross-road, the fugitives dismounted and entered upon a by-path so choked with thorns and brambles that they could not make their way through it except by laying down their cloaks to tread on; thus with difficulty they arrived in the rear of the villa. There Phaon advised Nero to hide for a short time in a sandpit; but he replied that he would not be buried while yet alive. As they waited for a secret entrance to be effected into the villa, he took up some water in his hand from a ditch, saying before he drank, “This is Nero’s beverage!” and then fell to picking the thorns which had caught in his cloak. When the hole in the wall was completed he crept on his hands into the nearest chamber, where he lay down on a pallet. Hunger and thirst

¹ Bronze coin cast at Doryleum: ITAAIKΩ ANΘYΠATΩ ΔOPYAAEΩN.

tormented him; coarse bread was offered him, which he refused, and tepid water, of which he drank a little.

"All who were present urged him to withdraw himself as quickly as possible from the outrages with which he was threatened. He ordered an excavation to be made in the ground large enough to receive his body, and pieces of marble to be used to line it, if any could be found, and water and wood to be made ready, that the last honor should be paid to his corpse, weeping at every order which he gave, and constantly repeating, 'What an artist the world is about to lose!' During these preparations a courier arrived, bringing a note to Phaon. Nero seized it, and read therein that the Senate had declared him an enemy to the state, and was causing him to be sought for, that he might be punished according to the ancient laws. He inquired what was this punishment; and was told that the criminal was stripped and his neck held by a forked stick, and that he was then beaten to death with rods. Alarmed, the Emperor seized two daggers that he had brought with him and tried their points; but laid them down, saying, 'The fatal hour has not yet come.' Now he called upon Sporus to lament and weep for him; again he conjured some one, by dying, to give him the courage to die. At times he reproached himself for his own cowardice, saying, 'I drag out a miserable and shameful life;' and added in Greek, 'This is not becoming for Nero; no, this becomes him not. He must decide in such a moment. Come, rouse thee, Nero!' The horsemen coming to arrest him were now heard approaching. When the sound reached his ears he repeated, trembling, the line of Greek poetry, 'Of panting steeds I hear the rapid feet.' And upon this, aided by his secretary, Epaphroditus, he plunged the dagger into his breast. He was still breathing when the centurion entered and, feigning to have come to save him, sought to bind up the wound. 'It is too late,' Nero said to him; and added: 'Is this your fidelity?' Thus speaking, he expired, his eyes remaining open and fixed."¹ Icelus, Galba's freedman, permitted the body to be burned; the last rites being paid to the master of the world by his old nurse and by Acte, faithful to

¹ Suet., 48-49. Cf. Dion, lxxiii. 29; Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* iv. 9; Eutropius, vii. 9; Aurelius Victor, *Epit.* v. 7. Cf. Saint Augustine, *Civ. Dei*, v. 19; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* vii. 6.

the memory of him whose first love she had been (June 9, 68 A. D.).

This wretched end, this prolonged death-struggle, in which the self-indulgent man suffered all possible pangs, in which the tyrant, craving death at his servants' hands, found no one to obey his last command, was the legitimate expiation of a reign which had been the very saturnalia of power. In recent times an attempt has been made to rehabilitate Nero; and in England, the country of cold reason, but also the country of eccentricities, the question has been asked, "Was Nero really the monster that he is represented?" A contemporary, without hatred and without extravagance, has answered the question in advance. "Nero," says the elder Pliny, "was the enemy of the human race."¹

But what was Nero's enemy? What was it that perverted this character to which nature had given some agreeable traits and amiable qualities? It was accession to



COIN OF CYTHNOS.²

absolute power at the age of sixteen. This Emperor is the most conspicuous example of the dangers of despotism to the despot himself, especially if a youth. Before he became master of the world he was attached to his mother and his tutors, he had a love for letters and for art. In private life he would have been a man of elegant tastes, and might have lived long and happily; an absolute ruler, he died detested in his thirtieth year.

As it was, the memory of this foolish buffoon, who had redeemed his crimes and vices by no great act in peace or war, did not perish with him. As he had not been publicly executed, many believed he was not dead, and his name was assumed by impostors.³ In the year 69 a slave who resembled him passed himself off for the late Emperor at Cythnos, and produced great excitement in Greece and Asia. In the reign of Titus appeared another. "Twenty years later," says Suetonius, "in my youth, there was another false Nero, whom the Parthians received with delight, and who was given up to us only with much difficulty."

¹ Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* vii. 6: *hostis generis humani!* Cf. *ibid.* xxii. 46. Pliny, born in 23, was thirty-one years of age at the time of Nero's accession.

² *Cabinet de France.*

³ Tacitus asserts that there were many (*Hist.* ii. 8).

Even at Rome, each year in the spring and on the 7th of June, his tomb was covered with flowers and wreaths, his image was furtively placed on the rostra, and edicts were posted, announcing his speedy return and the vengeance which he would inflict. But this was an unhealthy popularity, as in the case of Catiline, and one by which history should not be deceived.¹

An idea still more strange was that which the Apocalypse, composed shortly after his death, spread abroad in the Church, — Nero was to appear again at the end of the world as Antichrist.² In the eleventh century the imagination of dwellers in Rome was still haunted by the phantom of the first persecuting Emperor. His ghost, it was thought, lingered about Monte Pincio; and to put an end to these terrors the church of Santa Maria del Popolo was erected.

¹ Much exaggeration has existed on this question of Nero's popularity, which was exhibited only by certain interested persons, and has been employed in literature. Cf. Suet., *Nero*, 57: *Obiit . . . tantumque gaudium publice praeiuit ut plebs pileata tota urbe discurreret*. Cf. Plutarch, *Galba*.

² Cythnos, where the first of the false Neros appeared, was not far from Patmos, where Saint John at this time was writing his Apocalypse. See the curious study of M. Renan, *L'Apocalypse*, in which that learned author manifests, in my judgment, too much indulgence for Nero.

■ *Cabinet de France*, No. 3,139.



BRONZE MIRROR-BOX, ADORNED WITH A COIN OF NERO, THE REVERSE BEARING THE HEAD OF THE GODDESS ROMA.³

CHAPTER LXXVI.

THREE EMPERORS IN EIGHTEEN MONTHS (JUNE 68—DECEMBER 69 A.D.).

I. — GALBA.

TIBERIUS had placed the government under the protection of the praetorians. With an imperial family dying out, an aristocracy whose blood, whose courage even, was exhausted, with a populace composed of the dregs of the world, the soldiers quickly



GALBA
(GOLD COIN).

understood their power. Sejanus had given them the means of knowing their numerical strength and acting in concert, by establishing them at the gates of the city, in a camp like a fortress, whence they could safely defy the anger of an unarmed populace and rule the Senate by the fear of the sword. Already they had sold the Empire to Claudius, and hoped to sell it again to Galba. The idle soldiers of the praetorium could not, however, expect to keep for themselves alone so lucrative a privilege. So long as their candidate was a Caesar, the legions accepted him; but when this family was extinct, each army not unnaturally wished to make its own leader emperor, and the era of military revolutions recommenced. The eighteen months following the death of Nero were as bad as the worst days of the Republic (*annum reipublicae prope supremum*).

Servius Sulpicius Galba was born, near Terracina, 3 B. C. He was descended from one of the noblest families of Rome, a family whose origin could be traced back to Jupiter,—at least so he asserted in the genealogical table which he set up in the hall of the palace. Still further, it was there recorded that his mother descended from Pasiphaë, daughter of the Sun. His grandfather

had shown literary tastes. It was perhaps he who possessed the beautiful statue of Sophocles which has been discovered in our own times at Terracina.

Galba had been governor of Aquitania and of Upper Germany, and afterwards proconsul of Africa. The pacification of this latter province gained for him the triumphal ornaments and several priesthoods; after which he lived in retirement until the middle of Nero's reign. About the year 60 A. D. the Emperor sent him to Tarraconensis, which he governed eight years. He was at first, there as elsewhere, vigilant and severe. Thus, he ordered the hands of a dishonest money-changer to be cut off and nailed to his counter; he condemned to crucifixion a guardian for poisoning a ward whose legatee he was; and when the criminal pleaded his rights as a Roman citizen, he had erected for him a cross painted white and very much higher than the rest. But fear of giving offence to Nero soon lessened his zeal. "Inaction is better," said he; "a man cannot be called to account for what he has not done." However, when he saw that Nero was losing ground, he himself strove to become popular, and the letters of Vindex found him ready. On the 2d of April, 68 A. D., from his tribunal, where he had placed pictures of the tyrant's victims and a child, son of an exile whom he had



SOPHOCLES, DISCOVERED AT TERRACINA.¹

¹ Lateran Museum.

recalled from the Balearic Isles, he recounted to the assembled troops the crimes of Nero, the evils of his reign; and was interrupted by acclamations which saluted him Emperor.

He was seventy-three years old and disabled with gout; it was, indeed, late to begin so rough a journey. But these Romans, thorough sceptics though they were, were also superstitious in the extreme; for it was not conviction, but contempt, which had slain their gods. The former inhabitants of Olympus had deserted it to give place to an inexorable deity, Fate, whose will was revealed



LIBERTATI.¹

through omens; and a thousand omens had foretold for Galba a brilliant fortune: for fifty years he had looked for it, and would have looked for it longer still. Nevertheless, on learning the death of Vindex he thought himself lost, and meditated suicide. His

friends restrained him; very soon his freedman Icelus, who had travelled from Rome in seven days, informed him that Nero was dead and that the Senate recognized the election of the legions of Spain. All were agreed in selecting this old man, who had not long to live, and whose heir each one hoped to be.

During the disorders of the previous reign the idea of a restoration of the Republic had been secretly agitated. The senators quickly rallied to a scheme which restored to them the supreme power. With the death of Nero their confidence increased. A medal of Brutus, engraved with the famous legend, *Libertas P. R. restituta*, was exhibited. That was but an alarming threat; much more serious was the resumption of the sovereign right, which Augustus had taken from them, of issuing gold and silver coinage. Their pieces bore neither the name nor effigy of Galba, whom they apparently wished to reduce to the position of a mere military commander. At first Galba encouraged these hopes. He declared himself to be only the lieutenant of the Senate and people; on the coins which he struck along his route through Spain and Gaul he did not put his image, nor did he take the title of Augustus; the old republican title of imperator alone was to be read on them. His



LIBERTAS
PUBLICA.²

¹ Citizen wearing the liberty-cap. Silver coin.

² Reverse of a coin of Galba.

uncertainty as to the intentions of the different armies dictated this reserve. But the senators, intimidated by the praetorians, rested satisfied with their innocent monetary manifestation, and without exacting further pledges sent their oaths of allegiance to Galba at Narbo. At the same time he learned that Verginius firmly refused the Empire; that it had not been offered to Fonteius Capito; and that the army of Germany, after some hesitation, had promised obedience to the choice of the Spanish legions. He then assumed the title of Caesar and the state of an emperor. The restoration of the Republic had been a dream, and nothing more.

Before leaving his province he had put to death all the procurators of Nero, with their wives and children, and had punished several tribes whose submission was tardy. In the provinces of Gaul he bestowed citizenship upon all the allies of Vindex and remitted to them a quarter of the tribute; but cities which, like those of Belgica, had showed themselves hostile or lukewarm, were deprived of part of their territory, loaded with new taxes, or condemned to raze their walls. Rheims, Trèves, and Langres received the worst treatment; he confiscated the revenues of Lyons, while heaping favors upon Vienna,¹ — rewards and punishments equally ill-judged, since they created in Gaul two factions, the conquerors and the conquered. From being the choice of the Empire, brought into power by the universal reprobation of Nero, Galba became merely the leader of a party.



GALBA
IMPERATOR
(SILVER COIN).

At Rome Nymphidius, the praetorian prefect, governed in the name of the new ruler. This functionary had taken the most prominent part in the fall of Nero, and expected that the grateful Galba would continue him in office and power. He aimed even higher; called himself the son of Caligula, though his father was probably a gladiator, and dreamed of the Empire, in spite of his friends, who said to him: "Who in Rome would consent to call you Caesar?" He was killed by the guards whom he tried to

¹ Steininger (*Gesch. des Trev.* p. 83) thinks even that Galba sent to Trèves a colony, for whose establishment the former inhabitants of the city and some neighboring tribes were obliged to give up their land.

stir into revolt when he found his command given by Galba to Cornelius Laco. Galba searched carefully for his accomplices, real or supposed, and had them executed without trial; among them were a consul-elect, an ex-consul, and Mithridates, former king of Pontus. As the new Emperor drew near the city, towards the end of December, the naval force, hastening to meet him, desired the confirmation of their title of legion, given them by Nero. He rejected their entreaties; and when they resolutely demanded their eagle and their flags, he ordered them to be ridden down by his cavalry, and entered Rome over their dead bodies.¹

The reaction quickly took the form of a persecution of the friends of Nero. Galba sent to punishment his freedmen, also the famous Locusta, recalled all exiles from banishment, and

authorized the prosecution of informers. This was justice, and men applauded; he revoked, however, the gifts of the late Emperor, amounting to about \$108,000,000,² and commissioned thirty knights to prosecute for the recovery of the money



COIN OF GALBA, COMMEMORATIVE OF THE REMISSION OF THE TAX OF THE FORTIETH (BRONZE).

in Rome and throughout the Empire. The Hellanodicae of Olympia were condemned to restore 250,000 drachmas, the Pythia of Delphi 100,000. The popularity of Nero among the Greeks became all the greater for this. A tenth only of what had been originally given was left to the recipient; if actors or wrestlers had sold their presents, they were recovered from the purchasers. These measures brought in little money and much hate. He granted for a time the remission of the tax of the fortieth on imported articles; but to the court and the populace this temporary reduction was no equivalent for the magnificent prodigality of Nero. Galba's economy, though necessary, seemed sordid, and caused him to

¹ Nevertheless, later on he gave to the naval force the title "First Adjutrix." There exists a copy of a commission granted by him on the 22d of December, 68 A. D., to the veterans of this legion (Borghesi, *Œuvres*, iv. 204 seq.). See also the learned book of M. Ferrero, *L'Ordinamento della armate romane*, 1878.

² Tac., *Hist.* 20. 2,200,000,000 sesterces.

be satirized at the theatre.¹ The principal citizens, from whose number the judges were appointed, asked for the addition of a sixth class of judges as aid to the five already existing; he refused it, and abolished their winter recess as well as that of the beginning of the year. The army was treated no better. The German guard, renowned for its fidelity to the Emperors, was disbanded without pay; and the praetorians claiming the largess promised by Nymphidius, Galba replied, "I enlist soldiers; I do not buy them."² Many tribunes were dismissed; there were also removals from the city cohorts and night watch. All felt themselves menaced.

A rigorous government following upon a lax administration might have been accepted. The policy was dangerous, yet if carried out with firmness and ability, it would have been useful; but this very strict ruler had his weaknesses. He was entirely under the influence of three men, — Titus Vinius, his lieutenant in Spain; Laco, his praetorian prefect; and the freedman Icelus. They were to be seen —

"Tous trois à l'envi s'empresser ardemment
À qui dévorerait ce règne d'un moment." ■

Galba allowed them to sell offices and favors. Everything was to be bought, — the levying of taxes or their exemptions, pardons or punishments. The entire city demanded the death of the infamous Tigellinus, Nero's principal counsellor; but Tigellinus had bought the protection of Vinius, and Galba administered a severe reprimand to those base enough to desire the death of a man whose feeble health made it evident he would speedily come to a natural end. While the people were reading this magnanimous edict, Tigellinus was celebrating by a brilliant entertainment the marriage of his daughter to Vinius.

In appearance, all went well with the old Emperor. Two competitors, Fonteius Capito in Lower Germany, and Claudius Macer in

¹ Suetonius relates (*Galba*, 12) that Tarragona having presented him with a golden crown weighing fifteen pounds, he immediately had it melted, and demanded three ounces more, the bullion having fallen short to this amount. A renowned musician came to play for him during supper. Galba gave him five denarii, calling his attention to the fact that he gave from his own purse, not from that of the public. Plutarch says, however, that the pieces were gold.

² The sum promised by Nymphidius, — 7,500 drachmas to each soldier of the praetorian and city cohorts, and 1,250 to each legionary of the twenty-eight legions (*Plutarch, Galba*, 2), — would have amounted to sixty or seventy million dollars.

■ Corneille, *Otho*, act i. scene 1.

Africa, had been killed; Vespasian sent his oath of allegiance and that of Mucianus, governor of Syria; his son Titus, who brought them, had already reached Corinth, and this submission rendered needless the assassins whom Galba had sent into the province.¹ Verginius Rufus, whose crime it was to have deserved and to have refused the Empire,² had been persuaded to come to Rome. Gaul and Spain were devoted; the legions of Illyria, ordered into Italy by Nero, had returned to their camps; those of Upper Germany alone, who had received no recompense for their campaign against Vindex, showed active discontent. Deputies from the Belgian cities, ill-treated by Galba, crowded into the camps in mourning garments; and recalling to the soldiers their unrequited services, incited them to avenge at one and the same time the wrongs of half of Gaul and the humiliation of their eagles.³ When they learned that at Rome the praetorians also had reason to complain, that the people regretted Nero, and that the Senate was disaffected towards the new Emperor, they refused to obey him. On the Kalends of January, 69 A. D. (January 1st), they took oath to the Senate alone, their secret messengers being despatched to say to the praetorians: "We will not have an Emperor chosen in Spain; make a choice yourselves which all the armies can approve." This defection hastened the resolution, already taken by Galba, to announce his heir. He hesitated between Otho, who had early been associated with his fortunes, and Piso, whom he had long ago made the legal heir of his wealth and his name. The former as a young man had been of profligate life; but he had made himself beloved in his province, and possibly age and hardships had changed him for the better. In addition he had just ruined himself for Galba, and nothing less than an empire could free him from his creditors;⁴ at that moment he owed five million drachmas. Piso affected austerity, which recommended him to Galba, and the choice fell upon him (12 January, 69 A. D.).

¹ Suet., *Galba*, 23.

² He lived thirty years longer, in the enjoyment of public esteem, and only died under Nerva. Tacitus, then consul, delivered his funeral oration, and Pliny the younger has preserved for us his epitaph:—

*Hic situs est Rufus pulso qui Vindice quondam
Imperium adseruit non sibi sed patriae.*

■ *Ipsius exercitus pericula et contumelias conquerentes* (Tac., *Hist.* i. 54).

■ *Nisi principem, se stare non posse* (Suet., *Otho*, 5).



GALBA.¹

The choice of a young man of grave and virtuous character² was a challenge to this society, too fond of its vices to wish

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 18.

² *Ingenio trucem et longo exilio efferatum* (Tac., *Hist.* i. 21). The adoption was made without any legal formalities. Severus still further defied them afterwards, when he had himself adopted by a dead man. (See chapter xc.)

a Cato on the throne. This challenge was accepted by Otho and the praetorians. In presenting to them Piso as his heir, Galba had been brief and imperious. He came to tell them, he said, that, following the example of Augustus, he had adopted a son, and that he had chosen Piso, as in war brave men band together; that the Fourth and the Twenty-second legions had revolted, but that soon they would be reduced to order. In this manner a new emperor was presented to them, a civil war announced; and for the second time the Emperor forgot the largess! "It is certain," says Tacitus, "that the least liberality would have kept the soldiers to their duty; Galba was ruined by this antique austerity and sternness too great for our habits."

Two soldiers, Proculus and Veturius, both subaltern officers, undertook to transfer the Empire, and did transfer it.¹ They were in the confidence of Otho, and received from him counsel and money. From the time of his first arrival in Rome he had endeavored to stir up the praetorian cohorts and the other troops, then assembled in the city in larger numbers than had ever before been seen, — the legion which came from Spain with Galba, the auxiliaries, and the troops raised by Nero in Britain and on the banks of the Rhine and Danube in view of his expedition to the Caspian Gates, as well as those which he had called to Rome against Vindex. The liberality of Otho was well known; whenever he received the Emperor at supper he had been accustomed to distribute to the cohort of the guard a hundred sesterces a head, — to serve them, he said, as rations; and to these public gifts he added many in secret. Learning one day that a praetorian was at strife with a neighboring landowner in regard to the boundaries of a field, he bought the entire field and gave it to him. By such conduct, which the soldiers compared with the parsimony of the Emperor, Otho quickly gained a party. He would have been proclaimed upon the evening of the fourth day following the adoption of Piso, had he not feared the tumult and confusion of the night. The following morning Otho's freedman Onomastus collected a few soldiers, came to find his master in the presence of Galba, who was sacrificing before the temple of Apollo, and to whom

¹ Tac., *Hist.* i. 25: *Suscepere duo manipulares Imp. pop. Rom. transferendum; et tulerunt.*

the soothsayer foretold an approaching danger. Alleging an appointment with his architects on a question of repairing an old house he had lately bought, Otho left the imperial presence and hastened to the Golden Milestone, where he found awaiting him twenty-three soldiers, who saluted him emperor, drew their swords, and bore him to the camp. The tribune of the guard, either intimidated or an accomplice, allowed this handful of men to pass; their comrades crowded round them, the air rang with applause, and Otho was master of the Roman world.

In the meantime Galba, intent upon sacrifice, was wearying with prayers the gods of an Empire which even then had ceased to be his. When rumor of what was taking place reached the palace, Piso harangued the

MILITARY ADDRESS.¹GALBA, CROWNED WITH LAUREL.²

praetorian guard, which seemed to listen to him; but the rest of the troops repulsed with javelins the messengers sent to them, and the naval legion repaired to the camp of the praetorians. A single German cohort alone remained faithful. At one time the rumor ran that Otho had been killed; senators and knights, a moment before trembling and silent, came flocking to offer their services, and complaining that a great criminal had escaped their justice. This decided Galba to leave his palace, where he was preparing to defend himself. He was borne in a litter through the surging throng, which,

uneasy and in "the silence of great rage or great terror," witnessed this tragedy, whose end was not yet foreseen.

A soldier came forward with a bloody sword, boasting that he had slain Otho. "Comrade, who ordered you to do it?" asked

¹ Reverse of a large bronze of Galba.

² Engraved stone of the *Cabinet de France*, No. 2,086 (sardonyx of three layers, 29 mill. by 22).

the severe old Emperor. But Otho was not dead. The praetorians had placed him in the midst of the eagles, upon the tribunal from whence they had thrown down the gilded statue of Galba; and they now surrounded him, suffering neither tribunes nor centurions to approach. They seized each soldier as he came, embraced him, led him to the standards, and dictated to him a form



GALBA.²

of oath, in turn commending the Emperor to the soldiers and the soldiers to the Emperor. He, on his part, with hands stretched toward the crowd, sent kisses and bowed obsequiously, "courting empire," says Tacitus, "with the demeanor of a slave" (*omnia serviliter pro dominatione*), — a profound and truthful utterance. As soon as he considered the audience sufficiently numerous, Otho spoke. The substance of his harangue was this, — that he would retain only so much of the imperial power as they might wish him to keep.¹ He then ordered the arsenals to be opened, and the mob tumultuously rushed from the camp. As

soon as the cohort which preceded Galba saw them, the standard-bearer tore down the image of the Emperor and threw it upon the ground. This was the signal for defection. Some javelins thrown at random dispersed the crowd. The Forum was instantly deserted; and Galba's bearers, charged by a few horsemen, dropped

¹ Suetonius, *Otho*, 6. This speech was much more in keeping with the situation than the discourse put by Tacitus into his mouth.

² Bust of the Museum of the Louvre, No. 275.

his litter, and the old man fell to the ground. Various accounts are given of what he said when dying. According to some, he asked in a pleading voice what evil he had done, and begged for a few days in order to pay the *donativum*. The majority say that he bared his neck to the murderers, exhorting them to strike



TEMPLE OF VESTA (RESTORATION BY COUSSIN).

if it was for the good of the state. One soldier plunged his sword into his throat; others fell upon the corpse and tore it in pieces. Tacitus paints him in an epigram, — “Superior to a private station while he remained in it; and, in the judgment of all, worthy of the Empire, if he had not been Emperor.”

Piso was saved from the first fury of the assailants by the devotion of a centurion, and concealed himself in the temple of Vesta, where he was soon discovered and murdered. Vinus had

been killed before; and the three heads, upon pikes, were borne among the standards of the cohorts near the legion's eagle (16 January, 69 A. D.). Later, Vitellius found petitions demanding the price of blood from a hundred and twenty persons, and he caused them all to be put to death.¹

Piso had been four days Caesar, and Galba emperor for seven months; Otho was to reign eighty-eight days.

II. — OTHO.

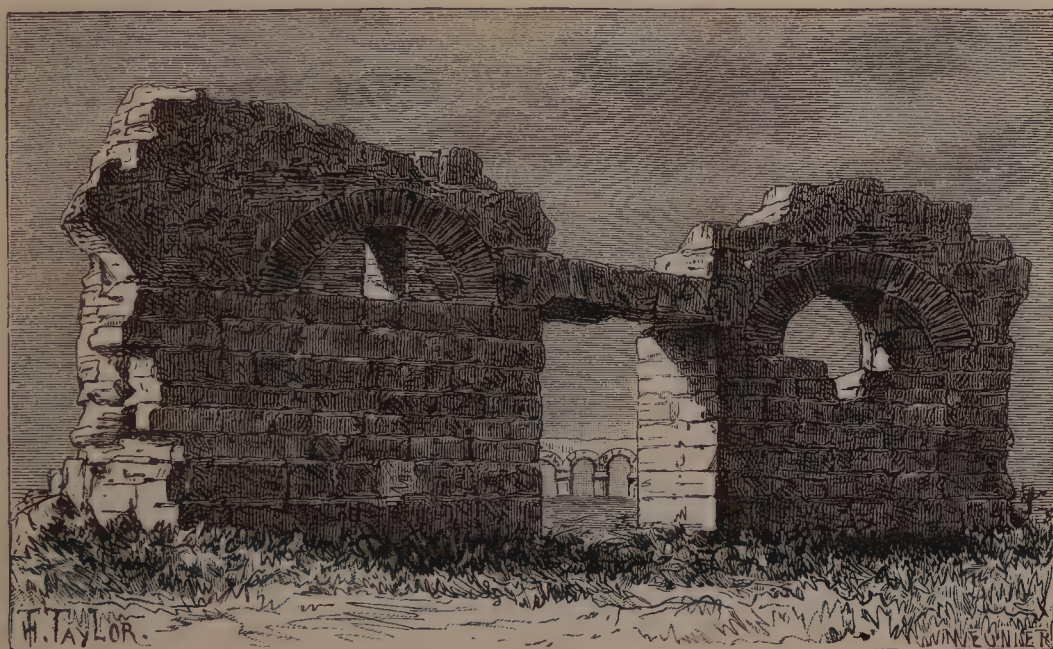
MARCUS SALVIUS OTHO, born in Rome April 28, 32 A. D., the descendant of an old Etruscan family of Ferentinum, came to power with a very bad reputation. The lower classes thought they had another Nero, and saluted him by that Emperor's name. He caused the statues of Nero to be set up again, and restored to office his functionaries; at the same time appropriating fifty million sesterces to finish the Golden House. As he had killed Galba, he found it necessary to honor the memory of him whom he seemed to have avenged. He had behaved with moderation in Lusitania for ten years, and at Rome his first acts were praiseworthy. He did, indeed, allow the praetorians to choose their prefects and to give Sabinus, the brother of Vespasian, the prefecture of Rome; that is to say, he permitted them to lay hands on the civil power. But he checked their zeal for massacre and pillage, and gave up to them only the three ministers of his predecessor. They wished to murder Marius Celsus, consul-elect and one of Galba's most zealous partisans. Otho, in order to save him, feigned great wrath, and had him loaded with chains; but a few days after he gave him an important command, and numbered him among his dearest friends. The soldiers demanded the suppression of the tax paid by them to the centurions for furloughs; these dues he retained, but had them paid from the treasury. "An expedient middle course," says Tacitus, "always taken by wise princes."² Very many had spoken against him in

¹ Tac., *Hist.* i. 41. Cf. Suetonius and Plutarch, *Life of Galba*. Dion (lxiv. 6) says that many people perished with Galba, ἄλλοι στυχνοί. It is not probable.

² *Hist.* i. 46.

the Senate; but he seemed to have forgotten it all, surrendering to the public hatred Tigellinus only, who died like a coward.

There was no time for him to do more, for already he had a rival. After the murder of Fonteius Capito, Galba had sent a new general of no distinction, Vitellius, to the legions of Lower Germany.¹ He was of very mean birth,—a fact which did not prevent the genealogists from tracing his descent to Faunus, king of the early inhabitants of Latium, and a Sabine divinity, Vitellia. His grandfather, a Roman knight of Nuceria, and procurator under Augustus, was the first of the family known to fame; but his father had been censor, and under Claudius second in rank in the



RUINS OF THE THEATRE OF FERENTINUM.

Empire. He himself, brought up at Capri with Tiberius and a favorite with Caligula, had had no experience of war; and of the two great offices he had administered,—the proconsulate of Africa and the stewardship of public works,—he had left the first with a good reputation, the second with the name of a shameless robber, having even, it was said, appropriated the votive offerings in many of the Roman temples, and put copper and tin in the place of gold and silver. These thefts had not repaired his fortune, which was wrecked by debauchery, and Suetonius accuses him of having

¹ Aulus Vitellius, born in Rome on the 7th or 24th September of the year 15 (Suet., *Vitell.* 3).

poisoned his own son in order to inherit the latter's property. On every side he was beset by creditors, and, like Otho, his only



OTHO.¹

refuge was the Empire. Vinius, whose good graces he had obtained by favoring the faction of the Blues at the circus, had proposed him to the Emperor as commander of the turbulent legions of Lower

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 19.

Germany. His popular manners and prodigality, with the neglect of every military regulation, would have won the soldiers to him in a few days. We have seen, however, that the outbreak began with the former legions of Verginius, but that they proclaimed no emperor. Not that they were republicans; for they had shown at the battle of Vesontium that they wished to keep at the head of the state a military chief, who for many reasons suited the army better than an assembly of old statesmen. But there was no one in the camp upon whose shoulders they could cast the purple. Their commander, Hordeonius, was an old man crippled with gout; and while waiting for a candidate to appear, they refused obedience to the other old man of the Palatine, who seemed to them merely the emperor of the Senate.

Valens, legate of one of the legions of Lower Germany, had killed Capito, — perhaps to remove a witness of his own abortive intrigues; he thought himself ill paid for this service, and urged Vitellius to seize on the fortune which lay open to him. The ruined general hesitated no longer when he learned that the legions at Mayence had broken the images of Galba. “You must either,” said he to the soldiers, “march against your comrades and begin war, or choose another ruler.” Valens replied by hailing him as emperor. Caecina, another legate whom Galba was prosecuting for his extortions, easily persuaded the army of Upper Germany to recognize this election. That of Britain followed this example, which was in turn imitated by the First Italic Legion, encamped at Lyons. This made eleven legions,¹ more than a third of the forces of the Empire and its most famous troops,² in revolt. The older men among the soldiers (*senes*) and the auxiliaries were left in the camps along the Rhine, so that the frontier should not seem abandoned to the Barbarians; and from the whole of the active troops three armies were formed. One, of forty thousand men, under the command of Valens, marched on Italy by the Cottian Alps;³ the second, of thirty thousand, under Caecina, was

¹ Four in Lower Germany, three in Upper, as many in Brittany, and the legion of Lyons. There were at this time thirty legions, without counting an equal number of auxiliaries, formed into cavalry and cohorts.

■ *Magna per provincias Germanici exercitus fama* (Tac., *Hist.* ii. 58).

■ The army which passed by *Lucus Augusti*, Luc, on the Drôme, must have crossed either Mont Cenis or Mont Genève (Tac., *Hist.* i. 66).

to cross the Pennine Alps; Vitellius was to follow with the third. The Germans and Belgians vied with each other in furnishing auxiliaries. Cologne, Langres, and Trèves offered men, horses, arms, and money. The enthusiasm was general, as if Belgica was about to recover its freedom. The same zeal existed among the soldiers: they brought their pay and their costly arms to supply the campaign fund; they were willing to set out at once, in spite of the winter, and cross the mountains in the midst of ice and snow. So rich did Italy appear! It was the promised booty, and they could plunder Gaul on the way.

The armies were already on the march when Otho's accession became known. Having revolted against Galba, they continued their revolt against his successor. What mattered the motive of the war? What they wished was war itself. The two leaders exchanged words of peace at first, then threats, and ended by



OTHO EMPEROR
(GOLD COIN).

despatching assassins against each other.¹ Otho, master of Italy and Africa, recognized by the legions of Illyricum and the East,² governed at Rome as if in time of peace, while yet preparing rapidly for war. He confirmed in their offices all those to whom Nero and Galba had made promises, recalled exiles to their former honors, did not remove L. Vitellius, his rival's brother, and contented himself with sending Cornelius Dolabella, whom many regarded as a candidate for the Empire,³ to Aquinum. To secure the favor of the provinces he divided the consulship between Verginius and Vobiscus, a noble of Vienna. He gave citizenship to the Lingones, sent fresh colonists to Hispalis and Emerita, and bestowed privileges on Africa and Cappadocia; he also extended the right of jurisdiction of Baetica⁴ over Mauretania, — a favor to one, a punishment to the other. He could also boast of a victory over the enemies of the state. Nine thousand Roxolanian horsemen who had invaded Moesia were cut in pieces to the last man, and he had just quelled a sedition of the praetorians, — which, however,

¹ Suet., *Otho*, 8; Plutarch, *Otho*, 4; Tac., *Hist.* i. 74–75.

² The Asiatic legions had sent to the praetorians two clasped hands as sign of peace (Tac., *Hist.* ii. 8).

³ Galba had disbanded the German guard, as being devoted to Dolabella (Suet., *Galba*, 12).

⁴ *Provinciae Baeticae Maurorum civitates dono dedit* (Tac., *Hist.* i. 78).

PLAN OF ANCIENT LYONS from Chenavard

Scale:
0 100 200 300 400 500 Meters

Note: The modern city is represented by fine lines, and the modern names are in Roman letters.



REFERENCES:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| 1 Imperial Palace | 9 Tombs | 16 Trajan's Palace |
| 2 Great wall of the Forum | 10 Colossal statue | 17 Tomb of the Lovers |
| 3 Walls supporting the upper city | 11 Temple of Augustus | 18 Small temple |
| 4 Baths of Apollo | 12 Altar of the 3 Gauls | 19 Hot baths |
| 5 Pantheon | 13 Two Equestrian statues | 20 Temple of Jupiter |
| 6 Old Landing-place | 14 Old bridge | 21 Temple of Vesta |
| 7 Baths | 15 House where the taurobolus was found | 22 Reservoir |
| 8 Small temple | | |

PLAN OF ANCIENT LYONS (AFTER CHENAVARD).

was not directed against himself. Believing him menaced by the senators, they had hastened under arms to his palace, with the outcry that there was no safety for him while the Senate existed. This riot furnished him with an occasion for delivering a grand eulogy on "this assembly which had maintained itself from the kings to the emperors, a body indestructible, immortal, which it was their duty to transmit to their descendants intact, as they had received it from their fathers."

It suited Otho's part well to recall the law to these rioters and to extol to them the Senate; unfortunately he had purchased permission to speak thus moderately by a gift of five thousand sesterces to each soldier. It must, however, always be remembered in his favor, as opposed to the abuse of power already shown by his rival. "Vitellius made use of his new elevation," says Tacitus, "only to squander in advance the revenues of the Empire in low profligacy and extravagant banquets. By noon he was always drunk, and heavy with eating." To this add a pride which caused him to disdain the name of Caesar,—and he was scarcely willing to accept that of Augustus, preferring to be called Germanicus. They were indeed Barbarians, Germans and Gauls, whom he led to the sack of Rome; Caecina, his general, wore their costume, and received deputations from the senates of Italy attired in the parti-colored blouse of a Cheruscan and the loose breeches of a Batavian.¹ The havoc committed by his troops upon the route was terrible. At Divodurum (Metz) they killed four thousand men, "which spread such terror throughout Gaul that there was no city which at the approach of the army did not go out in a body, headed by its magistrates, to meet the soldiers and beg for mercy. Women and children prostrated themselves upon the highways, and nothing which could disarm a furious enemy was omitted by these tribes to obtain in time of peace the favor of not being treated as if engaged in war."² At Langres, a friendly city, a bloody conflict took place between the legionaries and eight cohorts of Batavian auxiliaries. A pretext for war was vainly sought on the Aeduan territory; in addition to the money and arms exacted, this tribe furnished provisions gratuitously. Through fear, Autun had anticipated the requisitions. Lyons did the same

¹ Tac., *Hist.* ii. 20.

² *Ibid.* i. 63 and 66.

through zeal; but as the price of its proved devotion, begged for the destruction of its rival, Vienna, which city, after buying itself off by a donation of three hundred sesterces to each soldier, was still further obliged to furnish provisions, surrender its arms, and give a large sum secretly to Valens.

Aquitania, Narbonensis, and Spain had naturally declared against the murderer of the Emperor of their own election; this first army therefore reached the Alps peaceably. The other advanced through the country of the Helvetians, who, ignorant of the death of Galba, refused to recognize Vitellius. They chose a general and gathered troops; but their recruits could not stand against the trained legionaries. Caecina surprised them in the rear with the Rhaetian militia, at the same time attacking them himself in front. Defeated everywhere, surrounded in their woods and mountains by the Rhaetians, Thracians, and Germans, they surrendered at discretion, in order to save their capital, Aventicum.

This submission opened to Caecina the passes of the Alps. But the mountains, already guarded by winter, might perhaps be still further held by the partisans of Otho. By the desertion of a corps of cavalry intrenched upon the banks of the Po and ordered to defend the fords, the entrance into Italy was betrayed. Caecina, certain henceforward that no enemy would detain him, even on the Italian side, hastened his march. Otho, while saying that Nero had been lost through his delay, allowed himself to be forestalled; he accepted war, instead of himself carrying it into the midst of his adversaries. He could not without the greatest effort have awakened any warlike energy in Rome. Italy had seen no battles since the end of the triumvirate. The Senate, the nobles, and the knights shrank from the idea of leaving sumptuous villas and idle lives to enter again upon the hardships of the camp. Seated for more than half a century at the feast of Damocles, they were accustomed to see the sword suspended over their heads, and looked at it without fear, on condition that the feast was well served and nothing came from without to disturb their slothful existence. But to be obliged to fly to arms, to be exposed to fatigue, to wounds, and, like free men, die for Rome, as in the days of the Republic, — that was indeed too much to expect! Omens were made to speak; but Otho would not listen. He set

forth after commending the Republic to the Senate and speaking at length from the Forum of the majesty of the Roman people, in whose name he went out to battle (March 24, 69 A. D.). He took with him the praetorians, the city cohorts, detachments of the legions at the moment stationed in the city, volunteers, and two thousand gladiators, whom he armed as soldiers. He marched without pomp, always on foot, at the head of the standards, wearing an iron cuirass, but led by his soldiers rather than guiding them himself. Insubordination prevailed in this army, devoted though it was to the chief whom it had chosen, and who had showed himself worthy of the affection of his soldiers. But after such disorder and so many catastrophes, the soldier doubted his officer, and called that treason which was only prudence. "Obedience and discipline," says Tacitus, "were the only virtues lacking to this party, which was not wanting in courage."

While Otho was directing towards the Po the main body of the forces he had been able to gather at Rome, and seven legions, — those of Dalmatia, Pannonia, and Moesia, — were preparing to join him, his fleet proceeded to the coast of Narbonensis, in the hope of there arresting Valens. It engaged him in a successful combat, — which was, however, rendered useless by the absence of any skilful or respected commander (the supporters of Otho had put their own general in irons); and Valens, weakened only by a few cohorts, which held the fleet in check, crossed the Alps. Caecina had need of this relief. A too precipitate attack upon Placentia had failed, and Suetonius Paulinus, the greatest general of the time since the death of Corbulo, crossing the Po after Vitellius, had come to give them battle with partial success at Campus Castorum, twelve miles from Cremona. But the soldiers accused Suetonius of not wishing to complete his victory, and loudly demanded to be again led to battle. In vain the old general pointed out that since the union of Valens and Caecina, the Vitellians having no further relief to expect, everything was to be gained by protracting the campaign; that thus they might be starved out, and time given for the troops from Moesia, above all for the redoubtable Fourteenth legion — which by itself had held in check the rebellious Britons and conquered eighty thousand islanders — to join them; Otho, anxious to see the end, gave the order for battle. To this first fault he added that

of taking away the command from Suetonius and of himself yielding to the foolish urgency of his friends, who kept him at a distance from the field of battle. The followers of Otho, surprised while marching on a narrow causeway, were cut to pieces (April 14);¹ and those who escaped the carnage regained in disorder their camp of Bedriacum, whose gates they opened on the morrow to the followers of Vitellius. Otho was at Brixellum,² whither a soldier hastened to inform him of the defeat. Those around the Emperor refused to believe in it. "This messenger," they said, "is but a coward who has fled from the field of battle." The soldier made no reply; but burying his sword in his own breast, fell bleeding at the feet of Otho. This death touched him deeply. "No," he cried, "I will no longer expose the lives of such defenders!" In vain his friends pointed out to him what forces he still had left,—the half of the army which had not been in action, the defeated soldiers of Bedriacum, anxious to revenge themselves, the legions of Moesia, which were already in Aquileia,—in vain the soldiers swore to redeem his fortune, those at a distance holding out their hands to him, those near by embracing his knees. He rejected all these projects of civil war. "One battle is enough," he said; and calmly, without ostentation, made his last preparations. He spoke with kindness to each one according to his age and rank, ordering the young, beseeching the old, to depart and take themselves out of the way of the victor's resentment, and with calm brow and firm voice he reproached them for their useless tears and grief. He saw that those who left him had either boats or carriages, burned all his letters, and distributed what money he had among his servants. Preparing thus for the last sacrifice, he heard a tumult, and perceived that those who at his order were leaving camp were being arrested as deserters. "I must live yet one more night," he said. He forbade violence to be used towards any one, and opened his tent to all who wished to speak with him. Left alone at last, he asked for some water and two poniards, whose points he tried; then, having assured

¹ Dion (lxiv. 10) puts the number of men killed on both sides as high as forty thousand. [Cf. the picturesque account of the battle in Tacitus, *Hist.* ii. 40 *seq.* — ED.]

² Bressello, on the right bank of the Po, eleven leagues from Cremona. The position of Bedriacum is uncertain, — perhaps near Ustiano, upon the left bank of the Oglio.

himself of the departure of his friends, he lay down quietly and slept. At the break of day he woke, and with one blow pierced his heart under the left breast. At the sound of a groan his slaves and freedmen rushed in; but he died at once. He was only thirty-eight years old. His funeral took place immediately, as he had ordered. His body was borne by the praetorians, who covered his hands and wound with their tears and kisses; several threw themselves upon the funeral pile. At Bedriacum, at Placentia, and in the other camps there were many similar deaths.¹ This noble end of a leader unwilling to prolong civil war, and the affection of the soldiers for their chief, relieves a little the darkness of the age. Like a reflection of antique virtue, it shines amidst the orgies and cowardly acts of Vitellius and Nero, keeping alive men's faith in devotion and courage, as Thrasea and Helvidius preserved the tradition of virtue (April 16, 69 A.D.).

III. — VITELLIUS.

THE Empire was offered by the soldiers to Verginius, who was in the camp at Brixellum; he again refused it, and escaped just as they were breaking into his house. The submission of the soldiers, proud, though vanquished, who yielded only because without a leader, was at last carried to Caecina by Rubrius Gallus. Upper Italy now saw renewed the horrors of former civil wars. The soldiery pillaged, and the German, Batavian, and Gallic auxiliaries satisfied at once their greed and their ancient spite. The leaders, subject to their own troops, dared not interfere; vanquished and vanquishers, both were feared. Quarrels ending in sedition were continually breaking out. Turin was burned, and the eight Batavian cohorts stationed there almost came to blows with their legion and the praetorians. In Pavia two Gallic cohorts were cut in pieces by their own legionaries, and scarcely was the tumult quieted when the Fourteenth legion was believed to be returning in order to attempt a surprise on the camp of the Vitellians. This

¹ Tac., *Hist.* ii. 46-51, and Suet., *Otho*, 10 and 11. The father of Suetonius, Suetonius Lenis (?), was then with Otho as tribune of the Thirteenth legion. Plutarch saw the Emperor's tomb; it was simple, and for its inscription bore merely his name.

corps, which long hesitated between obedience and revolt, was hastily ordered away. The praetorians were disbanded, the Seventh legion (*Gemina*), raised by Galba in Spain, was sent to Pannonia, and the First Adjutrix to Spain; the rest of the followers of Otho, sore with defeat, the punishment of their bravest centurions, and the insulting triumph of their rivals, were sent into winter quarters. These were auxiliaries all ready for a new candidate.

The horrible confusion under which Italy suffered spread to those provinces which had recognized Vitellius. In Africa the procurator of the two Mauretaniae had assumed, it was said, the insignia of royalty and the name of Juba, which recalled to the Moors their independence. The attempt was unsuccessful; but Cluvius Rufus, who governed all Spain, was accused of wishing to take this government for his share in the division of the Empire. In Britain the soldiers had driven away their leader, and Gaul had just been shaken by an unexpected outbreak of the religious and patriotic sentiment which always existed in the hearts of the rural population. A Boian peasant passed himself off as a god, and called himself the liberator of Gaul. He was followed by a crowd of fanatics, had already gathered eight thousand men, and the movement was gaining on the Aeduan territory, when the nobles of this state, who were eligible for senatorial and municipal honors at Rome, became frightened; and aided by some corps belonging to Vitellius, dispersed the mob and took captive its leader. He was thrown to wild beasts, who, having already been fed, refused to devour him. "He is invulnerable," cried the people; and it became necessary to have him killed by the soldiers. Nearer still to Rome, in Istria, a fugitive slave passed himself off as a Roman noble whom the cruelty of Nero had forced to seek refuge in this remote country; the populace and soldiers were collecting round him, when the imposture was discovered. Finally, the entire East was disturbed by the great insurrection of the Jews, to which the proximity of Parthia and the strange rumors spread through these provinces might suddenly give formidable proportions.

As is already known, Vitellius was not a man capable of putting a stop to this premature dissolution. He had but just passed the frontiers of Belgica when he learned the victory of Bedriacum. From that moment he would pass through the cities in nothing

less than a triumphal car, and descended the Saône in a barge loaded with every preparation for sumptuous feasts. No discipline existed among the servants, none among the soldiers. He himself laughed at their violence and pillage. Having reached the plain of Bedriacum forty days after the battle (May 25), and seeing a few recoil with horror from the putrefying corpses, he gave utterance to this thought, which has been repeated elsewhere in still more unhappy times: "The smell of an enemy's corpse is always sweet." Slowly he marched towards Rome, laying waste city and country as he passed; for it was less an army than an immense mob which followed him, — sixty thousand soldiers, of whom thirty-four cohorts were auxiliary troops, a still greater number of camp-followers, with buffoons, actors of every description, and charioteers, in whose midst he passed the only moments not devoted to the table or his heavy sleep. "Throughout the camp, as well as in the praetorium, nothing was seen or heard," says Tacitus, "but bacchanalian orgies, intermingled with uproar and murder." Seven miles out of Rome the soldiers fell upon the people who came flocking to meet them; even in the city, where their costume, their long pikes, and the skins which they wore excited curiosity and alarm, for a word, for a look, they slaughtered.

What mattered these disorders to Vitellius? The armies of the East had sworn allegiance, therefore away with care! He set up again the statues of Nero, and spent his time at the circus or at table. For him to reign meant to feast continually. Those Roman tyrants, alike in their proclivity for murder, yet had each some distinguishing vice; that of Vitellius was ignoble, — an insatiable gluttony. His biographer tells us that "he invited himself to feast with several persons at different hours of the same day, and that no banquet cost less than four hundred thousand sesterces. In order to keep up an appetite for these repasts, he was in the habit of taking emetics. At a supper given him by his brother, on the day of his arrival in Rome, there were served two thousand rare fishes and seven thousand birds. But Vitellius threw into the shade all this profusion by using on his own table a huge dish, which he named the shield of Minerva Tutela.¹

¹ This dish was of silver, and was preserved until the time of Hadrian, who had it melted (Dion, lxxv. 3).

In it were livers of plaice, brains of pheasants and peacocks, flamingoes' tongues, roe of lamprey, and a thousand other things which the three-banked galleys had sought from the remotest



VITELLIUS.¹

border of the Euxine to the Pillars of Hercules. He could not control his gluttony even during the sacrifices; he ate the flesh upon the altar, and the cakes which the priests were cooking." In a few months, says Tacitus, he devoured nine hundred million

¹ Museum of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 20.

sesterces.¹ He gave his name to certain dishes which in the time of Dion were still called by his name.

As for the administration, that was the business of Caecina and Valens, long rivals, now enemies, and one of them already a traitor. Vitellius had given them the consulship for the months of September and October, 69 A. D.: a year rich in consuls, counting as many as fifteen.² When this appointment was made, and his two generals put in charge of the government, it appeared to him that he had fulfilled his imperial duty, and that there was nothing now to do but to live well and merrily. This corpulent man had the easy temperament of all good livers. On his way from Cologne to Bedriacum he rescued from the rage of the soldiers more unfortunates than he left in their hands; after his victory he spared Otho's brother, pardoned Suetonius Paulinus, who had defeated him in the battle of Campus Castorum; and towards the end, at the most critical moment, having in his power a brother, son, and nephew of Vespasian, he permitted them to live.

As he had been in the camp, so he was in Rome, a base seeker after popularity: at the theatre he applauded with the populace, at the circus he supported their favorite charioteers. In the Senate, whither he went without any necessity, his manner and language were not those of a prince: he made long speeches, and took part in lively discussions compromising to the imperial dignity. Once, when Helvidius Priscus seemed to him to presume too far, he called the tribunes to the aid of his despised authority. At the end of the debate an effort was made to soften his anger. "Is it, then," he said to them, "so new a thing to see two senators differ in opinion?" That seemed quite dignified; but when he added that he had sometimes himself disagreed with Thræsea, the reminiscence was an unfortunate one. Dion praises him for not having confiscated any person's property, nor annulled the wills of any of Otho's friends.

These easy manners did not, however, prevent his following at

¹ Suet., *Vitell.* 13; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxxv. 12; Dion, lxxv. 2-4; Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* iv. 42; Tac., *Hist.* 95. Cf. Eutropius, vii. 12.

² There were four consuls-elect who had not time to enter into office. See Borghesi, *Fasti consulares*, p. 68.

times imperial precedents. Cornelius Dolabella, a prominent man whom he suspected, was murdered in his sleep; later, he seems to have forced another, Junius Blaesus, to take poison.¹ Suetonius asserts that to settle his accounts with his creditors he condemned them to death.² One of them thought to escape by crying out, "I have made you my heir," — a doubly dangerous remark, which would have caused him to be condemned, had he not been so already. Vitellius at once opened the will; and finding that a freedman was to share with him, executed both testator and co-legatee. At the same time were put to death two sons for asking for their father's pardon.

In those days the soothsayers were men of importance. In misfortune they were consulted; and, not unnaturally, when the highest position had been attained, they were proscribed. Vitellius ordered those of Italy to leave the peninsula before the 1st of October. They fled, or concealed themselves; but still, in their own way, launched an edict: "Greeting to all! By order of the Chaldeans, Vitellius is forbidden to exist in any quarter of the globe in the Kalends of October." All who could be seized were executed, — a severe reply to their joke; but the executioner had often a part in imperial pleasantries, and there were always people found to laugh.

This, then, is what the Empire had come to in the course of half a century after the death of its founder. In Rome brutal and profligate manners; in the armies insubordination; in the provinces doubtful allegiance; lax government everywhere; cities resuming their rivalries under the cover of revolution.³ With this, the peace bestowed by Augustus was disappearing; the frontiers, which he had lined with troops, left without defence: in short, the entire edifice which he had raised was tottering to a fall, and threatening to overwhelm the world in one vast ruin.

¹ Tacitus' account is not clear; it is not easy to understand how such a thing could be done. He says even that the joy of Vitellius upon seeing Blaesus dead confirmed belief in the crime: *addidit facinori fidem* (*Hist.* iii. 39).

² Dion only says, what is more probable (*lxv.* 5), that he was satisfied with the surrender of the proofs of his indebtedness.

³ *Discordibus municipiorum animis magis inter semet quam contumacia adversus principem* (Tac., *Hist.* iv. 3). As had happened in Lyons and Vienna in Gaul, Leptis and Oea in Africa entered into bloody combat (*Ibid.* 50). Cf. Suet., *Vesp.* 8: *Provinciae civitatesque liberae, nec non et regna quaedam tumultuosius inter se agebant.*

This rapid disorganization was inevitable with a constitution where everything depended upon the master. For once the excess of the evil brought about, for a time, a salutary reaction. To this glutton, clad in the purple of Augustus, a true prince was about to succeed; and there was so much vitality in this mighty Empire that it recovered repose and prosperity as soon as a strong hand grasped the reins of government. The Augustan age recommences with Vespasian, and continues under Titus, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines,—still without guaranty for the future, since after them everything was again left to chance and force, but making of their reigns a most prosperous epoch in the history of the human race.

The list of Emperors shows how rapid had been the decline and destruction of the Roman aristocracy under the double action of its vices and the law against treason. The nobles no longer fill the high offices, formerly their province; and the leaders of the army being new men, it is from among this class that the masters of the Empire will henceforth be selected. After the Caesars yet one more patrician, Galba, held the supreme power. Otho belonged to a royal house of Etruria; but Vitellius was only of equestrian rank. Vespasian²

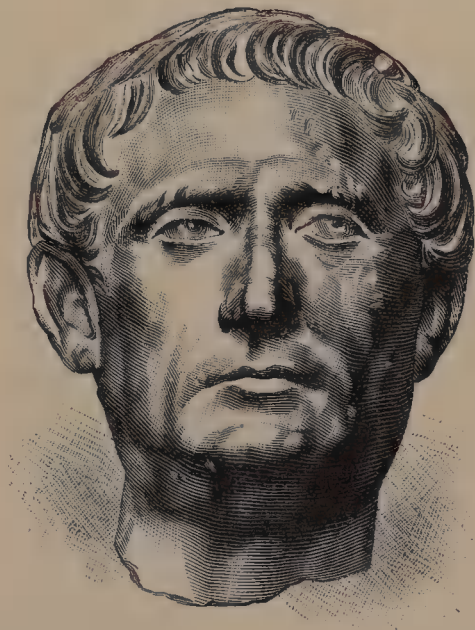
VESPASIAN.¹

¹ Marble found near St. John Lateran.

² Titus Flavius Vespasianus, born at Falacrinum, near Reate (Rieti), on the 17th of November, 9 A. D. (Suet., *Vesp.* 2).

was the son of a Sabine peasant; and Italy, as well as the patri-
ciate, being exhausted, the provincial Emperors soon followed.

Vespasian's grandfather had been a centurion in Pompey's
legions at Pharsalia, and his father did not attain much higher
rank in the army; but being appointed to collect the tax of the
fortieth in Asia, he showed such honesty that many cities raised
statues to him, bearing this inscription: "To the honest collector
of taxes." This nobility was as good as any, and Vespasian never



TRAJAN'S FATHER (M. ULPIUS TRAJANUS).¹

blushed for his ancestry, but laughed
at those who would trace it to one
of the companions of Hercules. As
Emperor he took pleasure in visit-
ing the places where his childhood
had been passed; he forbade any-
thing to be changed in the humble
house where he had lived; and even
on solemn festivals he always drank
from a little silver cup given him
by his grandmother. History re-
grets his cowardly flatteries of Ca-
ligula; but under a jealous despot-
ism sycophancy is the price paid for
safety by honest but timid persons.

His services under Claudius re-
deem his reputation. Legate of a legion during the expedition to
Britain, he encountered the enemy in thirty engagements, subjugated
two powerful tribes, twenty cities, and the Isle of Wight. Upon this
he received the ornaments of the triumph, two sacerdotal offices, and
the consulship for the two last months of the year 51. Sent by
lot to Africa as proconsul, he proved himself both honest and severe,²
and returned from his province poorer than he went,—so poor,

¹ Bronze bust found in Servia, and now in the Museum of Belgrade.

² Suet., *Vesp.* i. 4. Tacitus (*Hist.* ii. 97) seems to assert the opposite. Vespasian had
without doubt already shown rigid economy in this administration. Hence that riot of
Hadrumetum, when turnips were thrown at his head, and those unfavorable recollections
(*famosum invisumque*) left among the inhabitants, while Vitellius had made himself beloved
by his laxity and prodigality. One thing is certain, — that Vespasian was poor when he left the
province. Still, Suetonius accuses him of having extorted two hundred thousand sesterces
from a young man who wished to obtain the laticlave. Burrus also was known to sell his
influence; and, unfortunately, conduct like this, not infrequent in other ages, has not always
caused the offender to lose his reputation as a gentleman.

indeed, that, consul though he was, and recipient of triumphal honors, he was obliged, for a livelihood, to engage in horse-dealing. He however accompanied Nero on his journey to Achaia, during which expedition he risked his life by falling asleep while the Emperor was singing. His disgrace was brought to an end by the necessity felt at the time for an able general of low birth. The Jews had just defeated the consular lieutenant of Syria and captured an eagle. Corbulo being dead, and Suetonius Paulinus forgotten in his government of Moesia, Nero bethought himself of Vespasian, and gave to him the command of the three legions sent against the Jews (latter part of 66 A.D.).

His first care was to re-establish discipline; and to succeed in this design, he used the best of all methods. Everywhere his soldiers saw him fighting at their head; on one occasion during a siege several arrows entered his shield, and he was wounded in the knee. His great ability, together with the devoted assistance of his son Titus and Ulpus Trajanus, the father of the future Emperor, did the rest; the conquered Jews were once more shut up in Jerusalem, and the entire East, taught by the Greeks to hate the race of Abraham, rang with Vespasian's name. After Nero's death he successively recognized Galba, Otho, and Vitellius. But when he read to his troops the third oath of allegiance, his soldiers showed by their silence that they no longer intended submissively to accept chiefs given them by the other armies. They repeated the murmurs of several of the Moesian cohorts,—were they to have less weight than the Spanish legions who had elected Galba, than the praetorians who had chosen Otho, or than the German army which had proclaimed Vitellius? Alone at this moment in the entire Empire they were fighting the enemies of Rome; and to reward their pains they were to be taken from a province which they loved, and exiled to the banks of the Rhine, where a severe climate and hard service awaited them! And this undoubtedly with the intention of separating them from their leader, that thus he might be prevented from accomplishing the vengeance bequeathed him by the dying Otho in the name of the state, like himself a victim.¹ A copy of a letter, written, it was

¹ Tacitus (*Hist.* ii. 80) and Suetonius (*Vesp.* 4-6) say that this project, attributed to Vitellius, of transporting the German legions to the East, displeased the inhabitants as much,

said, by that Emperor, and summoning Vespasian to the relief of the Empire, was in fact circulated.

The generals in command in the Eastern provinces had the same interests with their soldiers. Mucianus, at the head of four legions in Syria, might have disputed the purple with his colleague; but as rivals neither would have succeeded, and this he had the wisdom

to see. Besides, the soldiers favored Vespasian, one of whose sons already showed ability. Mucianus, without family, had only himself to think of, and believed it safer to make an Emperor and impose upon him conditions, than to seek to become one himself.

Until this time unfriendly towards the commander of the Judæan legions, he now made a reconciliation with him, and offered to recognize him as chief. The prefect of Egypt, associated in their plans, promised two legions; some troops in Moesia had already placed Vespasian's image upon their standards; and it was believed that the legions of Illyricum, van-



THE YOUNG TITUS.¹

quished, without having fought, at Bedriacum, would hail the avenger of Otho and themselves. There were fleets and numerous auxiliaries; also the friendship of Vologeses, and oracles which announced that about this time a master of the world would come out of Judæa. A Jewish prisoner had named this ruler of the world; during the lifetime of Nero, Josephus, being

as it did the soldiers. There was besides a long-standing jealousy between the Syrian legions and those of the West. Under Tiberius, they alone of all the Roman army had not placed Sejanus in the centre of the standards, and they alone also at the latter's death received a gratuity from the Emperor (Suet., *Tib.* 48).

¹ From a bust at Naples.

brought before Vespasian in chains, solemnly announced to his captor that he was a prophet, and must be treated accordingly, adding the prediction that Vespasian would one day be Emperor of Rome.¹

On the 1st of July, 69 A. D., Vespasian was proclaimed in Alexandria by the prefect of Egypt; two days later the army of Judaea saluted him Emperor, and at the same time Mucianus administered the oath to his legions. To the honor of the troops and their new monarch, be it said, there was no question of a large gratuity. Money was needed for the preparations, and it became necessary to lay a requisition on the people of the country. Mucianus gave all he had; others imitated him, especially the allied kings of Edessa, Commagene, and Ituraea.² Each and all expected to make good their investments in the event of victory; but, adds Tacitus, all had not, like Mucianus, the right and the power to indemnify themselves.

It was determined that deputies should be sent into Armenia and Parthia to secure the peace of the frontier; that Titus, the elder son of the Emperor, should take upon himself the reduction of Jerusalem; that Vespasian should occupy Alexandria and Carthage, in order to close Africa and thus starve Rome; that Mucianus should march on Italy, inciting revolt among the legions of the Danube on the way; that, finally, urgent messages were to be sent to set Gaul in commotion, overthrow the wavering fidelity of the armies of Britain and Spain, and hold out to the praetorians the hope of re-establishment. The seven legions of Illyricum,³ already decided did not, however, wait for Mucianus, but took the initiative under the influence of a legionary legate, Antonius Primus, a man of tarnished reputation and a bad citizen, but a soldier of courage and resolution, who knew how to command, and enforce obedience.⁴ The chiefs of the Sarmatian Jazyges, who undertook to guard the Danube, were taken in pay, and also two kings of

¹ Suet., *Vesp.* 5, and Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* iii. 8, 9; Tac., *Hist.* ii. 74-78, v. 13: *Profecti Judaea rerum potirentur.*

² Tac., *Hist.* ii. 81; Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* vii. 28.

³ There were three legions in Moesia, two in Pannonia, and two more in Dalmatia (Tac., *Hist.* ii. 85-86; iii. 7, 9, 10, 50).

⁴ Tac., *Hist.* ii. 36. He was a Gaul from Toulouse surnamed Becco. Driven from the Senate in 61 A. D. for a forgery, he had been restored by Galba, who gave him command of the Seventh legion (*Gemina*). (Suet., *Vitell.* 13; Tac., *Ann.* xiv. 40; *Hist.* ii. 86.)

the Suevi, Sidonius and Italicus, who followed Primus when, in spite of Vespasian's orders, he crossed the Julian Alps with the cavalry and vexillarii.

The Vitellians also took the field; but no one would have recognized in these languid, enervated soldiers, marching in disorder and almost without arms along the Flaminian Way, the proud German legions so renowned throughout the Empire. The bravest of them had remained in Rome as the twenty new cohorts of

the praetorium and of the city.¹

The leader in command of those who were sent forward, Caecina, jealous of the credit of Valens, had already lent a favorable ear to the propositions of Sabinus, Vespasian's brother, who was prefect of Rome. Caecina chose to be deliberate about his treason. In order to give his agents time to conclude the bargain, he, with a military foresight which proved his ability, chose the line of the Adige as the proper place to hold in check an enemy already master of Aquileia, Vicentia, Padua, and the strong position of Verona.

By these well-calculated delays he gave to the Flavians time to

gather more than forty thousand men, and to his accomplice, Lucilius Bassus, to secure the defection of the fleet at Ravenna. When this news reached him he threw down the statues of Vitellius which were in his camp, and inscribed the name of Vespasian on his standards. But his soldiers were indignant at this treason towards the choice of the German legions: falling upon Caecina, they put him in chains; and then, without a leader, and in disorder, abandoned their lines and returned to join the troops left at



A VEXILLARY (FROM THE COLUMN OF ANTONINE).²

¹ Sixteen praetorian, four city, each of a thousand men (Tac., *Hist.* ii. 93).

² The vexillary was the standard-bearer and, in addition, the veteran who, having finished the legal term of service, was retained *sub vexillo*. The corps serving separately from the legion were also called *vexilla*: *Germanica vexilla* (Tac., *Hist.* i. 31, 70); *equitum vexilla* (*Hist.* ii. 11); etc.

Cremona. Taking advantage of the sedition, Antonius Primus crossed the Adige, no longer defended, and in two days reached Bedriacum, whence he might be able to cut off the relief which Valens would not fail to bring them. However, resolved as soon as possible to strike some decisive blow before the Transalpine provinces became disturbed or the Germans, who threatened an invasion through Rhaetia, should appear, he at the first moment sent out a strong reconnoitring party towards Cremona, which eight miles from Bedriacum encountered two hostile legions and drove them in disorder back upon the city. The same day six other legions entered it, after a march of thirty miles in twenty-four hours. Instead of resting after their fatigues, they crossed the city and the intrenched camp which protected it, and advanced to the attack, leaving Antonius scarcely time to remind the Moesian legions that this was less a quarrel of two Emperors than of the two armies of the Danube and the Rhine.

They fought all through the night. The moon, having risen behind the Flavians, threw heavy shadows of the soldiers and their horses in advance of their line, thus misleading the attack of the Vitellians; while the latter, seen in broad light, were harassed by arrows, not one of which missed its aim. In the morning, while the Third legion, from Syria, was worshipping the rising sun, came news of the arrival of Mucianus; the air resounded with wild shouts, and the army, making a supreme effort, stormed the camp. The Vitellians, in despair of longer resisting, had recourse to Caecina, whom they freed from his chains and implored to intercede for them; and they hung out upon the city walls, as a token of their submission, the veils and fillets worn by suppliants in the temples. This was the first victory, since the time of Sylla, gained by the troops of the Eastern provinces over those of the West.

In the strife a father had been killed by his son, a brother by his brother. This is a common crime in civil war; but one of these murderers boasted of his deed as of a glorious exploit, and demanded a reward from the generals. "A like piece of ill-fortune," says Tacitus, "was known at the time of our former dissensions. One of the soldiers of Pompeius killed a brother in the ranks of Cinna; but having recognized him, refused to survive, and fell upon his sword." Even civil war had degenerated.

On the day of the battle a market was held at Cremona. This inspired the greed of the victors; and during four days the city was given over to the brutal passions of forty thousand furious soldiers and as many more camp-followers. The Flavians gave the city up to the pillage of the Vitellians, and sealed their reconciliation over its smoking ruins. After the pillage and the murder of all the inhabitants, the city itself was burned; and of this flourishing colony, founded two hundred and eighty-six years before to arrest Hannibal and the Gauls, nothing remained standing but the little temple of Mephitis outside the walls.¹

The fall of Cremona excited the greatest grief in Italy. For more than a century² the peninsula had heard no sound of arms, except at Bedriacum, nor seen a cottage burned by soldiers; and now Pannonians, Dalmatians, Suevi, natives of Moesia and Syria were bringing upon her the disasters which four generations had known only through stories told in the watches of the night. The leaders were conscious of the atrocities of the sack of Cremona, but suffered it because they were no longer masters of their soldiers, — some, because they lacked authority, like Pompeius Silvanus, “who in talking allowed the time for action to pass;”³ others because they tried to obtain it by disastrous methods, like Antonius, who gave the soldiery the right of replacing their dead officers. The votes gave rank to the most turbulent; and the soldier no longer being dependent upon his chief, the leaders being elected by the tumultuous caprice of their soldiers, discipline became corrupted by these seditious practices.”

Fabius Valens, who, on account of the defection of the fleet, had not been able to go by way of Rimini and Ravenna, heard in Etruria of the disaster of Cremona. He formed the plan of embarking for Narbonensis to raise troops in Gaul, Britain, and Germany, and thus open his first campaign; Narbonensis, however, had already pronounced for Vespasian. Valens, driven by a tempest

¹ Tac., *Hist.* iii. 1–35; Dion, lxxv. 15; Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* iv. 41. “The Vitellians did the most injury, because they knew the houses of the rich men.” Spite of Antonius’ order to release all the captive Cremonians, the soldiers wished to sell them for slaves; and no purchaser coming forward, they began to kill them (*occidi coepere*, Tac., *Hist.* iii. 34). Then relatives and allies redeemed them in secret.

■ Since the sack of Perugia, 40 B. C.

³ *Socordem bello et dies rerum verbis terentem* (Tac., *Hist.* iii. 50).

upon the islands of Hyères, near Marseilles, was captured by the galleys of the procurator, Valerius Paulinus, and after a time put to death. This news and that which arrived from Italy decided the defection of Spain and Gaul. Britain alone hesitated; and the islanders, seeing in these conflicts a chance of regaining their liberty, took up arms with that intention. Upon the Rhine, Civilis aroused the Batavians, not so much against Vitellius as against Rome. Germany was in commotion; and all the Barbarians, from the Hercynian Forest to the Caucasus, feeling that the mighty hand of the Empire had been lifted from them and turned against itself, rose and marched upon the dismantled frontiers. The Dacians had crossed the Danube; the Euxine was covered with pirates; and in Pontus one of the late king's freedmen was calling the neighboring nations to arms.¹

Amidst the noise of an Empire breaking up around him, Vitellius, "hidden in the shady groves of the gardens of Aricia," seemed to hear and see nothing, "like those slothful brutes which, if you give them food, lie down and sleep."² He had regarded the Empire as a banquet, and desired to finish the feast in tranquillity. He roused himself, however, on hearing of the defeat at Cremona, and on the approach of the Flavians he sent out from Rome fourteen praetorian cohorts, all the cavalry, and the legion formed of the marines. These were picked men; with them he could close the Apennines, which were already covered with snow, and possibly imperil the victorious army hurried forward by Antonius, in a confused and disorderly crowd, upon the capital, in order to arrive there before Mucianus. But Vitellius did not know how to employ them to advantage; and on the rumor that a new war was breaking out behind him, he detained them in the strong position of Narnia. A centurion, with the aid of forged letters purporting to be from Vespasian, had just brought about the defection of the fleet of Misenum. Puteoli, which would be ruined if the war should continue, had pronounced for him who was in command of Egypt and Asia. Capua, through rivalry, remained faithful to Vitellius; but a troop which the Emperor despatched against the rebels went over to their side, and also captured Terra-

¹ Tac., *Hist.* iii. 44-47.

² *Jacent torpentque* (Tac., *Hist.* i. 36).

cina. The Samnites, the Marsians, and the Pelignians joined the rebels; "and of the empire of the world there was left to him only the space included between Circeii and Narnia." Even the army in camp at this latter place abandoned Vitellius on being shown the head of Fabius Valens, whom the soldiers believed to be obtaining succor from Gaul and Germany.

The Flavian chiefs knew the character of their troops; and for Rome, taken by assault, they dreaded the fate of Cremona, whose destruction had seemed to all Italy a work of Barbarians.¹ Antonius and Mucianus sent pressing messages to Vitellius, which decided him to treat with Sabinus, Vespasian's brother and prefect of the city. He accepted their conditions, — his life and a hundred million sesterces, with shelter in Campania. But though he was a man capable of shamefully abandoning power and contenting himself with the terms his rival deigned to offer, the former legionaries of Germany, who had chosen him to make their own profit out of his reign, and the Roman mob, who recognized with pleasure their own type in this drunken and gluttonous Emperor, did not

¹ Dion says of the Flavians that they showed so much ardor only for the sake of pillaging Italy . . . ἵνα τὴν Ἰταλίαν διαρπάσωσιν • ὃ καὶ ἐγένετο (lxv. 9). They were, in fact, Barbarians. We have seen that Antonius took in his pay two Suevian kings, who, with their troops, were placed in the first line in the second battle of Cremona (Tac., *Hist.* iv. 21). The soldiers of the fleet of Ravenna were for the most part (*magna pars*, *ibid.* 12) Dalmatians and Pannonians who had been drafted into the legions. The cavalry played an important part in this war. Sustained by the auxiliary cohorts, it had been the main cause of the success of the first battle before Cremona; and this cavalry, these cohorts, were chiefly levied in the provinces where the legions were quartered. Tacitus (iii. 19) says of the Moesian auxiliaries that they were as good as the legionaries; and one legion, the Eleventh, had six thousand Dalmatian auxiliaries. It is clear that the chiefs had good reason to fear for Rome. The Vitellian army was composed in nearly the same way. Civilis reminds the Gauls (Tac., *Hist.* iv. 17) that in the battle with Vindex it was the Batavian cavalry which had crushed the Arverni and Aedui, and that the Belgae formed part of the legions of Rufus; and he adds: *Vere, reputantibus, Galliam suismet viribus concidisse*. There were so many Germans among the Vitellians that at the sack of Rome all the tall young men were killed, for the reason that unusual stature indicated a Barbarian (*proceritas corporum*, Tac., *Hist.* v. 14). In the ranks of the legions there were many provincials from the frontier districts who had entered the legions after serving in the auxiliary cohorts. At Cremona the Third legion, which had come from Syria, worshipped the rising sun, as if it had been entirely composed of Syrians. At the siege of Jerusalem acts of distinguished valor were performed by a Syrian, a Bithynian, etc. (Josephus, vi. 1, 6, and 8). Finally, the despair of the Syrians on hearing that the legions of the Euphrates were to be sent to the Rhine proves that relations of all kinds had been established between the provincials and the legionaries who were permanently in camp in the provinces. The armies, being posted along the frontiers, that is to say, in the least Romanized parts of the Empire, and recruiting chiefly in their immediate neighborhood, would naturally alter their character by degrees, and we have no occasion to wonder that they ended by having nothing Roman about them.

propose to lose the advantages they had promised themselves. Soldiery and people once again ranged themselves together in favor of the ignoble creature, heartless and brainless, whose vices so well suited their own. When, from the steps of the palace, he announced to the crowd that he had relinquished the imperial power, which had been laid upon him against his will, violent clamors broke out, and he consented to withdraw his abdication.

The night brought back his fears. At daybreak he left the palace, wrapped in a dark-colored toga, surrounded by his weeping servants; his young son followed him, borne in a litter: it was a scene resembling a funeral procession. He had summoned the people into the Forum, and from the rostra repeated his declaration of the preceding day. For the love of peace, he said, and for the good of the state, he withdrew, asking only that the people would remember him, and that they would have compassion on his brother, his wife, and the innocent age of his children; and upon this he presented to them his son. Lastly, he detached the dagger from his belt, in token that he renounced his right of life and death over the citizens, and attempted to give it to the consul, who was unwilling to accept so dangerous a present. Again the soldiers and the people clamored against this renunciation; and when Vitellius directed his steps towards his brother's dwelling, they objected to his withdrawing into a private house. The palace was his abode, they cried; it was thither that he must go: and they barred all the other streets, leaving open to him only the Via Sacra, which led to the Palatine; and Vitellius returned to the palace.

Meanwhile the rumor of the abdication had spread, and the principal senators, most of the knights, the soldiers of the urban cohorts and of the watch, had gathered around Sabinus. An accident brought about a street encounter between the two parties near the Quirinal. The Vitellians getting the better of their adversaries, Sabinus fled for shelter to the Capitol, whence he sent a messenger to Vitellius reproaching him with the infraction of the agreement. This success had not increased the courage of the unhappy Emperor; he excused himself, throwing the blame upon his troops, and dismissed the messenger by a secret door, "fearing

lest the soldiers, in their aversion to peace, might kill the man who had come to mediate between the two parties."

Thanks to a cold and heavy rain, the night passed without disturbance. In the morning the Vitellians assailed the Capitol, making their way by means of the houses which, since Rome had become so great a city, had been permitted on the sides of the hill, their roofs being on a level with the foundations of the old fortress. For a while they were beaten back with stones and tiles flung down from the tops of the porticos; but the insurgents threw lighted torches, which set the surrounding buildings on fire, and followed close upon the flames. A barricade of a new kind arrested them, — the statues of gods and heroes, which Sabinus had heaped up at the entrance of the fortress. Two flank attacks, one through the grove of the Asylum, the other by way of the hundred steps which adjoined the Tarpeian Rock, brought the assailants upon the plateau. The struggle was brief. Some few, more courageous than the rest, were killed; but most fled soon enough to find a way of escape open, — which by no means hindered them from claiming later the honor of having fought for Vespasian and in defence of the Capitol. Others escaped, mingling with the Vitellians, whose password they had been able to obtain; Domitian, clad in a linen garment, went out with the priests, and took refuge near the Velabrum with one of his father's clients. Seated at table in the house of Tiberius, Vitellius had watched the conflict from a distance. Sabinus and the consul Quintus Atticus were brought to him. He attempted to save their lives; but in spite of his entreaties the populace tore in pieces Sabinus. The consul Vitellius was able to save.

While this was going on, the flames had gained possession of the Capitol, and the temple of the Empire was becoming a mass of ruins.

Upon the faith of the treaty which was in process of negotiation, the army of Vespasian had stopped at Otriculum, and there was tranquilly celebrating the Saturnalia. Upon receiving news of what was going on in Rome, the troops were at once sent forward towards the city: Antonius, with the infantry, by the Flaminian Way; Petilius Cerialis, with the cavalry, by the Via Salaria. A repulse which the latter experienced in the suburbs intoxicated the

populace, who armed themselves with whatever they could find, and rushed with great uproar to the ramparts. Vitellius, not much encouraged, although he had received news of his brother's success in Campania, repaired to the senate-house, where nothing better could be found to do than to send a deputation to the Flavians, "counselling peace and concord." He even despatched the vestals with a letter, in which he requested a day should be fixed "on which to terminate everything." Antonius received the sacred virgins with great respect, and continued to advance as far as the Milvian Bridge, where he designed to halt his troops, to avoid fighting within the city. The philosopher Musonius also proposed to arrest their advance by calling on them to consider their afflicted country; he, however, was received with howls of derision, and narrowly escaped with his life. The prey was too attractive, and the soldiers carried along their chiefs.

There were many sanguinary encounters,—in the gardens of Sallust, in the Campus Martius, especially in the camp of the praetorian guard, which was besieged in the usual way with the tortoise, with battering machines, earthworks, and fire. Otho's praetorians were especially vindictive here, making it a point of honor to re-enter victoriously the lucrative place whence they had been driven out by the praetorians of Vitellius. Not one of the latter begged for quarter when the camp was stormed; not one would have obtained it had he asked. This was, like the whole of the war, a quarrel of soldiers rather than of emperors.



CONCORDIA.

A part of the population aided the Vitellians, while the rest looked on at the battle from the tops of the houses as at a gladiatorial show, applauding the strong and skilful, howling their contempt at the unlucky or cowardly, on whichever side they were; and if a group of disbanded soldiery sought shelter in the shops, the lookers-on pointed out the fugitives to their pursuers. The populace and the slaves followed the carnage, picking up the spoils which the soldier, busy with his destructive work, neglected, and plundering the dead. But, from the great extent of the city, it was impossible that fighting should go on everywhere. In quarters not yet invaded men continued their usual routine of business or

amusement. The baths and taverns and places of ill-repute were open and filled. The public calamity was like a new zest to pleasure, and the idea of patriotism was so completely extinct that no one suffered in the affliction of the country. Disastrous news arriving a few days later from the provinces did not produce any disturbance,¹—a fresh proof that Rome was no longer Rome, and that the people who inhabited it had utterly ceased to be Romans.

Nevertheless these dwellers in Rome, incapable of foresight or action, whose hearts no longer responded to the public woe,



SCENE OF BATHS (WOMEN).²

quickly learned to their cost—without for that becoming any more patriotic as citizens—that the cowardice or carelessness which stands aloof from danger by no means follows the best way of escaping the peril. The half-barbarous soldiery, scouring the city as conquerors, began by killing at random all whom they met. When the streets had been blocked with heaps of the slain, and the public

¹ Tac., *Hist.* iv. 12: . . . *nequaquam maesta civitas . . . caesos exercitus, capta legionum hiberna, descivisse Gallias, non ut mala, loquebantur.*

² From a vase in the Hamilton Collection (Tischbein, vol. i. pl. 59).

squares and pavements of the temples were red with blood, they searched the houses for legionaries from the army of the Rhine; it was enough to be tall and young for a man to be considered a soldier of the German legions, and murdered accordingly. After blood, gold; the rich were denounced; slaves betrayed their masters; the latter were slain as Vitellians, and their property seized. Dion and Josephus speak of more than fifty thousand murdered at this time.

It was a long time before Vitellius himself was taken. "When he learned that the Flavians had entered the city, he escaped by



SCENE OF BATHS (MEN).¹

the rear of the palace, with his cook and his baker, and had himself carried in a litter to the Aventine, where his wife lived, hoping thence to escape into Campania. There again harassed by uncertainty, he returned to the palace, the silence and desolation of which filled him with terror. After wandering through the building in much distress, he took refuge in the porter's room, fastened the dog outside, and barricaded the door with a mattress and bedstead. Presently came the Flavians and seized him in his retreat. He begged for his life, even though it were to be spent

¹ Tischbein, vol. i. pl. 58.

in prison, and declared that he had important secrets to reveal to Vespasian; but they dragged him down the Via Sacra towards the Forum, half naked, his hands tied behind his back, a rope around his neck, his garments torn, amidst insults and outrages. Some pulled his head back by the hair, others raised his chin with the point of a sword to make him show his face and look up at his overthrown statues and at the spot where Galba had



POMPEIAN MOSAIC, CALLED THE CAVE CANEM.

perished; some threw mud at him; others called him drunkard and incendiary, and reproached him with his red face and sot-tish figure. Thus he was dragged to the Gemoniae, where he was hacked in pieces and his remains thrown into the Tiber"¹ (21st December, 69 A. D.). He was the last of the patrician emperors.

¹ Suet., *Vitell.* 17; Tac., *Hist.* iii. 68-85; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxxiv. 7; Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* iv. 42.

Vitellius does not merit the twenty-five pages we have bestowed upon him ; but we have already seen what Caligula, Claudius, and Nero did with the palace and the government of Augustus, and it was needful that we should also see to what Rome and the legions of Caesar had come in the time of Vitellius.



COIN OF VITELLIUS (LARGE BRONZE).

CHAPTER LXXVII.

VESPASIAN (69-79 A.D.).

I. — WAR WITH THE BATAVI (69-70).

VESPASIAN saw the conclusion of two wars, — one begun under Nero, the other under Vitellius, — neither of which belongs to the history of his reign, except that his generals finished them.

The originator of one of these wars, Civilis, was of royal race in his own nation, — an ambitious designation applied among the Germans to petty chiefs who, born of honored families, were by this circumstance raised above the mass of freemen. Civilis had good causes of resentment against the Empire. Nero had put his brother to death, and he himself had but narrowly escaped. Galba having pardoned him, the soldiers of the army of the Lower Rhine accused him of being an accomplice in the murder of Fonteius Capito, and demanded his death. Vitellius saved him a second time; but he swore not to cut his hair until he had had his revenge. When Antonius Primus had proclaimed Vespasian in Pannonia, he wrote to Civilis to make a feint of insurrection for the purpose of hindering the legions of the Rhine from hastening to the assistance of Vitellius. The Batavian willingly accepted the commission, with the intention of turning the feint into a reality. He had lost an eye, and he prided himself upon this misfortune, which assimilated him to Hannibal and to Sertorius; he, like them, cherished the hope of crushing Rome by his subjects' arms. Upon receipt of the letters of Antonius he secretly called together the chief men of his nation,¹ explained to them that Gaul was in disorder, the Germans friendly to all the enemies

¹ The Batavi — a section of the Catti, who had established themselves in the neighborhood of the ocean — occupied a part of what is now Southern Holland, Utrecht, Gueldres, and Northern Brabant.

of Rome, the Roman camps deserted,¹ Italy in a blaze, and the moment arrived to throw off a hated yoke. The Canninefates and Frisians, neighbors of the Batavi, joined in the plot; and

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emissaries were sent to bring about a defection of the British auxiliaries and of those Batavi who had served with the legions, especially the eight cohorts who had rendered themselves famous by their courage at Bedriacum.

¹ The Fifth and Fifteenth legions together did not contain five thousand men.

² Bust in the Uffizi Gallery at Florence.

In a few days the Romans had been driven from all the positions that they occupied in the island formed by the Rhine, the Vahalis, and the Mosa. As the result of a battle, Civilis obtained their weapons; and the German oarsmen of the fleet carried over to him the vessels belonging to the legions, twenty-four in number, which made him master of the Lower Rhine. After this brilliant success he sought to persuade Germany and Gaul to take up arms. The latter, however, sent him but a few volunteers, far more coming from the right shore of the Rhine. Two legions seeking to return into the island were unsuccessful on account of the defection of their Batavian cavalry and the feeble resistance made by the Ubian and Trevirian auxiliaries. What remained of the legions hastened to take shelter at Vetera Castra.¹

The eight Batavian cohorts returning from Italy had already arrived at Mayence when the messenger from Civilis reached them, just as, in obedience to an order of Vitellius, they were about to turn back to re-cross the Alps. They responded without hesitation to the appeal of their compatriots; and on the road they destroyed, near Bonn, a third Roman corps which barred their passage. Civilis had now an army inured to fighting, and he led them at once to attack the fortifications of Vetera Castra. The army of the Upper Rhine hastened to the defence; but insubordination prevailed among these legions, the officers being in favor of Vespasian, and the soldiers of Vitellius. The soldiery, suspecting treason everywhere, and not without cause, had just compelled their commanding officer, Hordeonius, to resign his position. They then separated into three divisions, part of them encamping at Gelduba, — where they narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the enemy, — another portion at Novesium, and the rest at Mayence. However, the siege of Vetera Castra was raised. News from Italy at this time augmented the insubordination and ill-feeling among the legions. In a seditious tumult the soldiers murdered Hordeonius; and Dilius Vocula, whom they had placed in command, was obliged to flee in the disguise of a slave. The Roman troops united, and then separated again. They had sworn allegiance to Vespasian; two legions now set up again the images

¹ Fürstenberg, near Xanten, in the Duchy of Cleves, — or Xanten itself, according to Cluvier and Greenwood, *Hist. of the Germans*, i. 150.

of Vitellius, although they knew him to be dead, and in a few days threw them down again. These uncertainties and disorders favored the Batavi, who now captured Gelduba, and Civilis exercised his young son in shooting at the Roman prisoners tied to trees to serve as a mark. Other legionaries were sent as a present to the German chiefs; and ere long large bodies of German troops crossed the Rhine, which chanced to be so low that navigation was stopped and fords were formed in many places, as if the rivers themselves, those old barriers of the Empire, gave way before the Barbarians. Already the remote districts of Gaul were refusing enrolment and tribute. When news came that the Capitol had been burned, men's minds were impressed by it as by a presage from which there could be no escape. With this sanctuary fallen, the fortune of the Roman people seemed buried under its ruins. The Druids, emerging from their secret retreats, openly declared that the last days of Rome had come and that those of the Gallic Empire were about to begin; it was now the turn of the Transalpine nations to rule the world.

The Belgae, faithful to Vitellius, and consequently enemies to the new Emperor, were the first to break out into revolt. Two Treviri, Classicus and Tutor, with Sabinus, one of the Lingones, who claimed descent from Julius Caesar, pledged themselves to each other to deliver their country. They first tampered with the Belgian and German auxiliaries, and then with the legionaries themselves, assuring them that the troops of Vespasian were on the way to punish them for their hesitation in taking the oath to him. Two legions swore fidelity to the Gallic Empire upon the standards presented to them by Civilis,—an unprecedented step, and only to be understood when we remember that these legions were now entirely made up of provincials. The five thousand men whom Civilis with the German infantry held besieged in Vetera Castra accepted like terms. The Barbarians, however, were not willing to let their prey escape them. The Romans marched out, confiding in the oath; but five miles from their intrenchments the Barbarians fell upon them. Those who escaped the first massacre fled towards the camp; but the Barbarians had already pillaged it, and they now set it on fire, and the fugitives perished in the flames.

Civilis had at last obtained his revenge, and he now cut his hair. His ambition rising with his fortunes, he refused to concern himself in a foreign cause. Neither he nor any of his followers consented to take oath to the Gallic Empire. He dreamed of something different,—a vast dominion, of which his own country should be the centre, and Gaul and Germany the provinces. A young girl of the Bructeri, Velleda by name, had at this time a great reputation among the Germans as a prophetess. She dwelt alone in a tower in the depths of a forest, and no man was allowed to see her; one of her relatives, a sort of interpreter to the divinity, received questions and brought back her replies. She had predicted the destruction of the legions, and her credit was increased upon the fulfilment of the oracle. Civilis, who had already obtained her devotion to his interests, sent her as a gift a legate whom he had made prisoner. In his schemes, the Rhine being no longer a frontier, the fortifications which guarded it were to be destroyed. Colonia Agrippina (Cologne), the city of the Ubii, refused to destroy its walls and enter the league unconditionally; but from the Alps to the ocean all the camps were burned, with the exception of Mogontiacum (Mayence) and Vindonissa (Windisch), and the troops were dispersed. Two legions were sent by Classicus to Trèves; they obeyed, advancing sadly amidst the insulting joy of the Gallic tribes. A squadron of Italian horse alone refused, and shut themselves up in Mayence.

In the interior of the country Sabinus excited the Lingones to revolt, and had assumed the title of Caesar. But it was the opinion of many that a Roman would do as well for an emperor as one of the Lingones. This was the feeling of the Sequani, who, when attacked by their neighbors, the Lingones, resisted successfully. Sabinus took shelter in a villa belonging to him; being closely pressed, he set the building on fire, and is believed, like Sacrovir, to have perished in the flames.

This defeat reduced the zeal of the partisans of independence. In a general assembly gathered at Rheims, the Treviri and the Lingones spoke loudly for war. They were reproached with having betrayed the cause of Gaul in the time of Vindex. Then it was asked who should conduct the operations, give orders, and take the auspices? After the victory, where place the seat of empire?



Dissensions thus appearing before the struggle, what might be expected after the triumph? They were too far Romanized to conceive anything except an empire, while they were still too Gallic to forget the rivalries which made their designs impossible. Moreover, Civilis and his Germans held themselves aloof with an air of displeasure. "Do you prefer," the Remi asked, "to be called the subjects of the Catti and the Bructeri rather than citizens of Rome?" Finally, the assembly sent orders to the Treviri, "in the name of Gaul," to lay down their arms.

This, however, did not at all lessen the courage of the rebel states. But the leaders were not equal to the situation. Civilis wasted time in the pursuit of a relative whom jealousy had driven into the Roman party, and around whom had gathered a band of Tongrian and Nervian auxiliaries; Classicus enjoyed the pleasures of power, as if he were in the midst of peace; and Tutor made no effort to occupy the passes of the Alps. Four legions at this moment were advancing over them, under command of Petilius Cerialis, an able general; Mucianus himself was about to follow with Vespasian's youngest son, whom it was desirable to send away from Rome. Two other legions were coming from Spain, and the Fourteenth had been recalled from Britain. "Seven legions," cried the Remi in alarm, "are upon us!" Tutor marched to meet the troops who were emerging from Helvetia; and at sight of the eagles his legionaries went over to the Romans. He fell back, but was surprised at Bingen. The defeat relieved Mayence and all the valley of the Rhine as far as Vetera Castra. The legions encamped at Trèves, who were captives rather than rebels, immediately set up the name of Vespasian upon their standards; and Cerialis, scornfully sending away the Gallic auxiliaries, that the Empire might, as he said, itself alone avenge the insults offered to it, marched upon the last army, which protected the city of the Treviri. It was readily dispersed, and its chiefs were made prisoners. With prudent moderation, Cerialis received into his camp the old legions of the Rhine, and forbade that mention should be made of what had occurred. The soldiers were eager to sack the city of Trèves, but he restrained them. "Our fathers," he said, "came into Gaul only to put an end to your discords and to save you from the Germans. As a reward of our victories we ask of you

only the means of maintaining you in a condition of peace. But to have peace we need soldiers; for soldiers there must be pay; for this military pay there must be tribute. All else is held in common between us and you. You yourselves commonly command our legions and rule our provinces. There is no privileged class, and none excluded from power. If we have good rulers, remote as you are, you still share with us in our prosperity; if our rulers are cruel, we, who are nearest, are the first to suffer. . . . Enslaved by Classicus and Tutor, would your taxes be less? Were the Empire of Rome to disappear—a misfortune which may the gods avert!—what would be seen upon earth but a universal war among the nations? Eight hundred years of prosperity and discipline have been needed to raise this mighty power, which could not fall without crushing the world beneath its ruins. . . . Wherefore love and cherish peace and the Roman Empire, which is serviceable alike to the conquered and the conquerors.” These words were true, and were echoed throughout all the country of Gaul. The Lingones gave in their submission.

Civilis made an attempt to shake the fidelity of the Roman general. He wrote to Cerialis that Vespasian was dead, that Rome and Italy were a prey to civil war, that Mucianus and Domitian were without power and without consideration; that if the Roman general desired the empire of the Gauls, he himself with his Batavi would be content with the peaceful possession of their own country. Cerialis having made no reply whatever to this overture, the allies advanced to attack him. For a moment his army was imperilled; but a severe defeat which the Romans inflicted upon the troops of Civilis determined the defection of Cologne. The inhabitants of that city murdered all the Germans within their walls; and after having intoxicated a whole cohort of Chauci and Frisii, the best troops in the army of Civilis, who were to defend Tolbiacum, they set that town on fire and burned it. At this time arrived the legion from Britain and subdued the Nervi and Tongri.

Civilis thus saw his grand schemes melt away. His patriotic attempts outlasted his designs of personal ambition. To protect his island of the Batavi, he strove, but in vain, to defend Vetera Castra. Driven thence, he sheltered himself beyond the Vahalis,

cut the dike of Drusus in order to lay the country under water, and himself, with a hundred and thirteen chief men of the Treviri, went over into Germany in the hope of obtaining the assistance of the German tribes. During his absence Cerialis crossed the Vahalis, but narrowly escaped capture; and the Germans triumphantly carried off to Velleda the praetorian galley which they had been able to seize. The rains and freshets of the autumnal season were serviceable to the cause of the revolted nations. The Romans, without provisions or shelter, and on a marshy ground, grew weary of the struggle; and the Batavians were offended by



ROMAN SOLDIERS BURNING A VILLAGE.¹

the turbulence of the Germans and by the authority which Velleda claimed for herself. In circumstances like these, both parties naturally were willing to come to an understanding. The two chiefs had an interview upon a bridge over the Vahalis, the bridge having been broken in the middle of the river. Civilis obtained leave to live quietly with his own people, and the Batavi, exempted from all tribute, were only required to furnish to the legions auxiliaries, whose well-earned renown had been increased by this war against

¹ From the Column of Antonine.

the Empire. For himself, therefore, Civilis gained only fame; but his country obtained her liberty.

The insurrection in the two Gallic provinces of Belgium and Germany had failed. Its leaders were dead, or else fugitives; and a severe search instituted by Vespasian in all the cities brought to punishment any who had not perished on the battlefield. The Treviri were deprived of their liberty.¹

One of the chiefs, however, and the one most compromised, Sabinus, made his escape. After the burning of his villa he might easily have fled into Germany; but he could not persuade himself to part from his young wife, Eponina, and he concealed himself in an underground hiding-place, whose entrance



BARBARIC TRIBES PROMISING ALLEGIANCE.²

was known only to two faithful freedmen. He had been believed dead; and his wife, sharing the opinion of those around her, had been for three days plunged in inconsolable affliction. Secretly informed that Sabinus was still alive, she concealed her delight, and was conducted to his place of refuge, where, in the end, she determined also to remain. After seven months the husband and wife ventured to emerge, and made a journey

¹ From this period the name of the Druids no longer appears in history; but many times again we find mention of the Druidesses, who in 234 predicted the death of Alexander Severus, whom Aurelian consulted in 273 to know if the Empire would descend to his posterity, and who promised it to Diocletian. It will be seen that they were merely fortune-tellers. However, Ausonius counted an Armorican Druid among his ancestors (*Professores*, x. 22).

² From the Column of Antonine.

to Rome for the purpose of soliciting pardon. Being warned in season that the petition would be in vain, they left Rome without seeing the Emperor, and again sheltered themselves in their subterranean refuge. Here they lived during nine years; being at last discovered, Sabinus was taken to Rome, where Vespasian ordered his execution. Eponina had followed her husband, and she threw herself at the Emperor's feet. "Caesar," she cried, showing her two sons, who were with her, "these have I brought forth and nourished in the tombs, that two more suppliants might implore thy clemency." Those present were moved to tears, and even Vespasian himself was affected; but he remained inflexible. Eponina then asked to die with him whom she had not been able to save. "I have been more happy with him," she said, "in darkness and under the ground, than thou in supreme power." Her second request was granted her. Plutarch met at Delphi one of their children, who related to him this sad and touching story.


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Vespasian might safely have shown clemency in this case; Gaul was resigned to remaining Roman. Some few patriots did indeed preserve the memory of the standard which a hundred and twenty years before had been beaten down before Alesia by Julius Caesar, and had now been reared once more for "the empire of the Gauls;" but we

¹ Statue found near Rome (Museum Campana, H. d'Escamps, No. 77).

must not exaggerate their number, or the importance of the war just ended. It had been principally carried on by a people who were more German than Gallic, by a man whose thoughts were not mainly devoted to Gaul; and the Roman troops whom we have seen besieged and conquered, were merely what remained when the legions themselves had been called away into Italy. So soon as the latter returned, peace was at once restored. The great bulk of the Transalpine nations had not responded to an appeal which they did not understand, and those who had taken up arms quickly returned into their usual routine of life on being summoned to do so, as we have seen, by Cerialis. Internal order was at once re-established; and as from without there was for the time no threat of invasion, for Gaul, as well as for the Empire, began an age of prosperity which counts among the good ages of the world, and is known as the period of the Antonines. To this era Gaul contributed something, since she furnished, if not the ablest, at least the most respected, of these emperors, Antoninus Pius, the adoptive father of Marcus Aurelius.

II. — THE JEWISH WAR (66–70).

WE must now pass to the other extremity of the Empire, where a less dangerous but more difficult war was drawing to its close, — a war which has remained one of the great events of history, because in it an entire people seemed to perish.

The last moments of this people present, moreover, an interesting study in historic psychology on account of the strange moral condition in which the Jews were at that time, a sort of intoxication or divine delirium, produced by religious exaltation, which led them to hope against all hope. It is a phenomenon which re-appears in times of religious ferment, with always the same mingling of abominable cruelty and acts of sublime self-sacrifice, of passion obscuring the conscience or veiling the reason, and ardent faith which of the same man may make an executioner or a martyr; and yet, however terrible the spectacle may be, it is always less painful than that of the base appetites which we have been obliged to depict.

The Jews have been repeatedly mentioned in this History, — in the time of Pompey, of Caesar, and of Augustus. We have seen how they had planted their colonies and their synagogues throughout the East, and even in Italy, and everywhere sought to diffuse their belief in one God, — a belief which was undermining the already impaired authority of the pagan divinities, and preparing the way for the doctrines of Jesus.

Augustus had made their king Herod his friend, or rather the instrument of his designs in this part of the East. After the death of Herod, the Jews had requested of the Emperor that Judaea might be annexed to the province of Syria. He chose rather to maintain a national government, which relieved him of the burden and difficulty of a military occupation; and to Archelaus was given his father's crown. Ten years later, however, the new king, accused at Rome by his subjects, was deposed without even a hearing, and Judaea placed under the rule of procurators (6-37).

A caprice of Caligula restored this kingdom. Agrippa, grandson of Herod, had dared to pay court to the young Caius during the lifetime of Tiberius. "Shall I ever see the day," he said, "when that old man will depart to the other world and leave you master of this?" The remark was reported to the Emperor. A Roman noble would have paid for it with his life; the Jewish prince escaped with a mild imprisonment. Caligula, however, requited his friend for the danger the latter had incurred; after his accession he gave him the title of king, and accompanied the honor with a gold chain as heavy as the fetters Agrippa had worn. The favor of Claudius completed this unexpected good fortune; new provinces were added to his kingdom, and he reunited once more all that Herod the Great had possessed. But at his death (44) his son Agrippa, too young to succeed him, had only a tetrarchy; and Judaea, with Samaria, again came under the rule of procurators who, nominally subordinate to the governor of Syria, were in reality invested with independent authority.

No province at that time needed the firm hand of the Empire so much as did this unhappy country, for many years a prey to that incurable anarchy which announces the last days of a people. There no longer existed in it any social bond or public authority. Assassinations occurred daily in the streets of Jerusalem, even in

the temple in the midst of the throng and during solemn festivals.¹ The roads were not safe for the messengers of the Emperor; and those whom Josephus, the friend of the Romans, treats as robbers, sorcerers, and impostors, but whom the multitude called prophets and Christs raised up by Jehovah,² formed bands as numerous as an army.

The evil was not entirely due to the absence of an energetic government. The prophetic spirit was the soul of this people. Very skilful in conducting their private interests, in promoting



RUINS OF THE TEMPLE OF AUGUSTUS BUILT BY HEROD AT SAMARIA.

their fortune in traffic, the Jews failed when required to rise to general ideas. Science, which demands cold reason, and art, which presupposes a study of nature, the perception of relations, and the harmony of proportions, were always foreign to them. Apocalypses,

¹ "So they put to death Jonathan the high priest; and not a day passed when they did not kill several in the same manner." They were religious assassinations (Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* ii. 23).

² Saint Matthew (xxiv. 11, 24) speaks of false Christs and false prophets.

for which they had acquired a taste among the Mazdeans during the Captivity, had become their chief literary utterance. In times of crisis they expressed in that mode all passion, love, or hope. The Apocalypse of Saint John is the highest flight, and has remained the model of these symbolical works, in which the seer tells the secrets of the grave, reveals the decrees of the Most High, and announces to the rulers of the earth the chastisements which await them. Many kindred works had preceded, many followed it. It was a style of literature, Persian in its origin, which offered great resources to the poet and the believer. In the Revelation sent to the Seven Churches in Asia, the Apostle continues against the enemies of the New Jerusalem, against "the great harlot which makes drunk the nations with the wine of her fornication," the revolutionary *rôle* of the ancient prophets against the impious kings and the persecutors of Israel. He imitates their methods, he borrows their most terrible images; and by his burning words, by the combination of sublime visions and strange inventions, by his descriptions of Oriental wealth and barbaric ornament, was pleasing to the unhealthy imagination of the Southern races. Written at some time between the death of Nero and the fall of Jerusalem, this Apocalypse exercised no influence upon the revolt of the Jews; but it helps us to understand the mental state of a people whose intelligence, at once sterile and over-prolific, was now turned through sheer force of misery towards the most mystical reveries. Like the soul broken by grief, they had become superstitious and timid under the load of misfortune. Everything dismayed them; everything also caused them to hope. They passed continually from despondency to confidence, from love to hate. After having invited the Roman domination, they rebelled against it; after having a hundred times suffered their country to be parcelled out and their population distributed like a flock at the will of the purchasers, they now spoke only of national independence, and professed themselves ready to die for it.

They still believed in their holy temple, and fulfilled the external rites of their religion. But when they saw that their pure doctrines and their noble morality had not been able to save them, and that they, the people of Jehovah, they, the elect race, must obey those whose idols had been scourged by the bitter

irony of Isaiah, they clung with the strength of despair to the sole hope which remained to them,—the advent of a messiah.¹ The Christians indeed assured them that the Messiah had come, that his kingdom had begun, and that his law had been carried even into the court of Nero. In the sacred Victim fastened to the cross of Golgotha they refused to see the Saviour who was to make them rule over the world; and they waited still, listening to every voice that arose, following every man who said to them, “Come and see.”

“Nowhere,” says the historian Josephus, an eye-witness of the sufferings he recounts, “nowhere did impostors have so good an



MOUNT GERIZIM.

opportunity; whatever they promised was believed. They shared the country with the robber chiefs. Impious wretches, deceiving the people under false pretence of religion, led them into solitudes where they said God would make manifest by sure signs that he would free the race of Abraham from servitude. An Egyptian false prophet succeeded so well in seducing the people that he

¹ See, pp. 11, 12, in what a state of expectancy this people was. It is the mental condition of the Algerian Arabs. There is the same contempt for a higher civilization which they do not comprehend, and for laws purely rational, which seem to them contemptible by the side of their civil and religious law revealed by God himself, and the same tenacious hope in messiahs or marabout deliverers.

assembled nearly thirty thousand men on the Mount of Olives. At his voice the walls of Jerusalem were to crumble and the Romans take to flight.”¹ Another promised that they should be saved, and should witness the ending of their misfortunes, if they would follow him into the desert. Another invited the people to ascend Mount Gerizim, where he would show them some sacred vessels which Moses had concealed there.² Another offered to compel the waters of the Jordan to divide and let him and his followers pass through dry-shod. Others, on the contrary, drew their inspiration from Isaiah, and repeated his menaces against the house of Israel. “Four years before war was declared,” says Josephus, “a peasant began to cry out: ‘A voice from the east! A voice from the west! A voice from the four winds! A voice against Jerusalem and the temple! A voice against the bridegrooms and the brides! A voice against the whole people!’ From that time he ceased not to cry day and night: ‘Woe, woe to Jerusalem!’ On festival days he redoubled his cries; no other words ever issued from his mouth. Those who had compassion for him, those who denounced him, those who ministered to his wants, heard only those terrible words: ‘Woe, woe to Jerusalem!’ He was apprehended, examined by the magistrates, and condemned to the lash. To each question and at every stroke he responded without complaint: ‘Woe to Jerusalem!’ Discharged as a madman, he went throughout the country repeating his mournful prophecy. For seven years he continued to cry incessantly in this manner, without losing his voice. At the time of the final siege of Jerusalem he shut himself up in the city, ever making the circuit of the walls and crying: ‘Woe to the temple! Woe to the city! Woe to the people!’ Finally he added: ‘Woe to me!’ and at the same time was slain by a stone hurled from a machine.”

Scripture itself bears testimony to this latent ferment which was agitating the minds of the people. The Acts of the Apostles

¹ *Bell. Jud.* ii. 23. His flock was dispersed; many perished, but he escaped, and it is not known what became of him. This is why the tribune asked Saint Paul when, some time after, the Jews brought the Apostle to him that he might condemn him: “Art thou not then that Egyptian?” (*Acts*, xxi. 38.) For the Jews, Egypt was the country where wonder-working was taught (*Derenbourg, Hist. de la Pal. d’après les Sources rabbiniques*, p. 203, n. 2).

² *Ant. Jud.* xviii. 4. They went there in great numbers, bearing arms. Pontius Pilate dispersed the gathering, and was recalled in consequence.

speak of Simon the sorcerer, of the false prophet Elymas, and quote the remarkable words of Gamaliel. "Before these days," said he, "rose up Theudas, giving himself out to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were dispersed, and came to nought. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the enrolment, and drew away some of the people after him: and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered abroad."¹

The preaching of the new Gospel did not restore calm to their souls: for at Jerusalem the Christians were persecuted; and the more they spoke of an unknown Messiah, the more did the Jews cherish their hope in him whom they still expected, not lowly and persecuted, but glorious and powerful. To attain the promised dominion, national independence must first be preserved; and at this thought, all hearts were filled with courage. Those whom Josephus calls robbers were the first to spread the whisperings of revolt; for, as in the time of Mattathias and Judas Maccabaeus, these "robbers" were bold patriots who refused to serve the foreigner. Let us be just towards this nation, which gave to the world the greatest example it had ever seen: it was not a few men, nor an army, it was almost an entire people, who were about to die for their faith and their liberty. We grant that this sacrifice was not necessary, and that it proved useless to the descendants of those who made it, as well as to the whole human race, since on that day began a persecution which has lasted for eighteen centuries; that, in fine, this people were in the wrong, — in religion when they refused the Gospel which was the fulfilling of their Law; in politics when they repulsed the dominion of Rome, which would at least have given them public order. All this is true; but the historian finds so many wars undertaken from reprehensible motives that he cannot refuse his sympathy to those who have fought and fallen in the name of country and religion.

The Roman rule in Judaea had long been mild, as elsewhere, — even more than elsewhere, because the Jews of Palestine were especially protected by the first Emperors. Under Tiberius they had had in twenty-two or twenty-three years only two procurators; and the last one, Pontius Pilate, had been recalled to give account

¹ *Acts*, v. 36, 37.

for certain seditious movements which he had too severely repressed.¹ Under Claudius, a Roman soldier who had torn up a copy of the Pentateuch in one of the villages was decapitated, and a procurator who had allowed himself to be bribed was condemned to exile. For the same offence the Emperor sent to Rome a tribune of the soldiers, who was drawn on a hurdle through the streets of the city and then put to death.² To this stern justice was joined respect for their worship. No Roman officer entered the capital without ascending to the temple, there to adore the national God. Every year sacrifices were offered in the Emperor's name. This consideration went so far as to take care that governors were given the Jews who would be agreeable to them. It was at the request of the high-priest Jonathan that Felix, brother of the freedman Pallas, obtained the procuratorship of Judaea (52-60).³

But during the last years of Claudius and under the reign of Nero the excesses of the proconsuls of the Republic were renewed. Vintidius Cumanus at that time governed in Galilee, Felix in Samaria and Judaea. The eternal rivalry between the Jews and the Samaritans, and the hatred of the latter for their neighbors in Galilee, armed these populations against each other; and the procurators shut their eyes to depredations on either side so long as the lion's share of the spoils was given to them. On complaint of certain Jews, Claudius punished Cumanus, indeed; but Felix, a brother of the all-powerful favorite, was enrolled by the governor of Syria among the judges before whom the complainants were to set forth their grievances. Encouraged by this mark of his influence, Felix "continued his cruelties and acts of violence, exercising the sovereign authority with the odious and greedy baseness of a slave."⁴ He retained the apostle Paul in prison to extort money from him; and when the high-priest Jonathan reproached him with his exactions, he procured the latter's assassination.

¹ He did not arrive at Rome till after the accession of Caligula, who, according to Eusebius (*Hist. Eccles.* ii. 7), exiled him to Vienna in Gaul, where he killed himself in despair.

² Josephus, *Ant. Jud.* xx. 56, and *Bell. Jud.* ii. 12.

³ Josephus, *Ant. Jud.* xx. 8. Felix had married a Jewess (*Acts*, xxiv. 24). See, in Josephus (*Ant. Jud.* iv. 3, 10), the discourse of the high-priest Ananus, which renders full justice to the Romans. True, it is their friend Josephus who is speaking by his mouth.

⁴ Tac., *Ann.* xii. 54. It was already, as is evident, the system of government which the Turkish pachas have established in Palestine.

This was dangerous conduct; for if the people, incited by messiahs and rendered fanatical by the lower orders of priests, whom their chiefs despoiled of their tithes,¹ flocked in throngs to join the bandits and thus gave brigandage the color of a patriotic uprising against the foreigner, the rich and the noble sought in the support of the Roman soldiers the security which they lacked for their lives and fortunes. To alienate these would hence have been imprudent, if Jewish nobles had not dreaded the violence of their fellow-countrymen more than that of the procurators.² Beneath them, in fact, they beheld fermenting in the multitude, not only the germs of a political and religious struggle, but also those of a social revolution — an insurrection of the poor against the rich.

The new Dispensation, especially protecting the weak and the afflicted, had uttered many threats against the mighty. Many took the precepts of Gospel equality literally, and in the sense of their social application. Whenever a new doctrine appears, there are men who follow it entirely and in its true spirit; but there are also those who keep on its outside, never penetrating below the surface, and accept only what is agreeable to their passions. This division certainly was evident at the epoch of the promulgation of Christianity. While some looked with Jesus into heaven, others, as took place so often in the peasant rebellions of the Middle Ages, heard only the words which were applicable to earthly concerns. The first came unto Christ when he preached contempt of riches, — “No man can serve two masters: ye cannot serve God and mammon;” or taught them to prefer prayer to labor: “Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink. Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they? And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But

¹ For some time the higher order of priests had been accustomed to send their servants to seize by violence the tithes due to the sacerdotal class, and had refused the inferior priests their rightful share in them. The latter, reduced to the most frightful destitution, went over to the side of the people, who aided them by charitable gifts, and several times took up arms to enforce their claims (Josephus, *Ant. Jud.* xx. 8, 9).

² Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* ii. 31.

M A P
of
PALESTINE
for the
Jewish War



if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" This doctrine, so much in conformity to the customs of the East, where labor is a thing to be endured, and is never an imperious necessity, was sufficient to cause the abandonment of some workshops or offices, as it decided Peter to leave his fisher's net and Matthew his publican's seat. But other words,—for example, these: "The last shall be first, and the first last,"—were doubtless eagerly seized upon by the violent men who were inciting a factious revolution against the superior clergy, whom Jesus attacked as blind leaders of the blind, and against the rich, against whom the gentle master of the afflicted almost closed the avenues to heaven. His disciples were more specific in their teachings. At Jerusalem they required the faithful to have all things in common; and that which Saint James wrote "to the tribes of the Dispersion," he declared in plain language to the Jews at the capital, whose church he governed for twenty-nine years: "As the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun ariseth with the scorching wind, and withereth the grass; and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his goings." "Do not the rich oppress you, and themselves drag you before the judgment-seats?" And further on: "Go to now, ye rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you. Behold, the hire of the laborers who mowed your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth out: and the cries of them that reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived delicately on the earth, and taken your pleasure; ye have nourished your hearts in a day of slaughter."¹ We have had, unfortunately, too long an experience of popular revolutions not to see that these words, falling into the furnace in which men's minds were seething, added new fuel to the flame. Even those who rejected the new doctrine retained its denunciation of the rich, which was so much in harmony with their desires.

When war broke out, the first acts of the rebels were the burning of the office of public records, in which the debtors' obliga-

¹ Saint James (*Epist.* i. 10, 11; ii. 6; v. 1, 5). See also *Acts*, v. 1–11, the death of Ananias and Sapphira.

tions and contracts were consumed; the murder of the high-priest and of some of the principal citizens; and, finally, the destruction of the palace of King Agrippa and Queen Berenice.

At the head of this factious insurrection were the Zealots, a sect which had originated fifty years before, and, recognizing in heaven or on earth no master save God alone, had already a score of times attempted to break at one blow the yoke of Rome and that of the priesthood. The designs of the Zealots had long found expression in acts of violence. They had fled for refuge to the mountains, and there associated themselves with bands of robbers. But by sheltering their depredations under the guise of a religious doctrine, they had formed a party which was at the same time political and religious. The band of the Sicarii, mentioned with so much horror by Josephus, — men who assassinated in public places their designated victims, — calls to mind in some respects that terrible sect of Ishmaelites which, eleven centuries later, and almost in the same locality, filled Asia with dismay at their assassinations.

With leaders of such a character, — impostors, magicians, oppressed priests, and fanatical robbers, — what people would have kept the peace, especially when the more moderate party were themselves urged to revolt by such a variety of sentiments: by love for their country, for the religion of their ancestors, and for liberty; by implacable hatred against the friends of the foreigner, who were thriving upon their misfortunes; above all, by a firm belief in an unlimited power which had been promised them, and whose hour had now come?¹ What causes for a terrible explosion! In the year 65 it burst forth; and five years later it had swept away everything — the city, its temple and its people.

The spark which kindled the conflagration started from the city where the two religions, the two civilizations, brought face to face by Herod, became mutually exasperated by daily contact. While the Jews of Caesarea were assembled in their synagogue, a Greek, for the purpose of insulting their rites, went to the door of the house and sacrificed some birds. From this a riot ensued,

¹ Eleazar, leader of the active faction, was the son of the old high-priest Ananias, and one of the prominent persons of the city; two princes of the royal family of Adiabene, a lieutenant of Agrippa II., and other persons of importance, were also of the national party.

followed by complaints before the procurator, Gessius Florus, who decided against the Jews, notwithstanding that they had given him eight talents to purchase his support. On hearing this the people of Jerusalem insulted the governor. He responded as those who have swords at their command usually do,—his troops charged the multitude. Many were slain, others imprisoned, and some, in spite of their position as members of the equestrian rank of Rome, were lacerated with the scourge and afterwards crucified. In vain did King Agrippa,¹ the Sadducees, the Pharisees, the priests, and the rich citizens interpose between the insurgents and the Roman troops. Urged on by the Zealots, the people hastened to take possession of the impregnable fortress of Masada, which was Herod's arsenal, and then came back to assail the advocates of peace in Jerusalem. As a declaration of war against the Emperor himself, Eleazar refused to permit the sacrifice of offerings made in his name (May, 66).



COIN OF
CAESAREA.²

Gessius Florus had retired to Caesarea. Left almost to themselves,³ the rich opposed the insurrection. For seven days, fighting went on in the streets. But the Sicarii had time to hasten down from their mountains. As soon as they took part in the struggle, it was at once decided. The Jewish nobles were driven from the upper city, their palaces were set on fire, and those who were taken prisoners were put to death. Roman soldiers had been left by Florus at Jerusalem. These defended themselves in the towers of Hippicus, Phasaël, and Mariamne, until, after exhausting their resources, they threw open the gates, with the stipulation that their lives should be spared, but were massacred, though it was the Sabbath day.



COIN OF
SCYTHOPOLIS.⁴

¹ The son of the friend of Caligula and Claudius. At the death of his father he had received only a tetrarchy. Afterwards the Romans permitted him to assume the title of king.

² Astarte, standing; bronze coin of Nero, struck at Caesarea, bearing the inscription, "Caesarea, near the harbor of Augustus." Herod, who had built this city in honor of Augustus, had constructed there a harbor as large as that of the Piraeus, and protected against the violence of the sea on the southwest by a breakwater of enormous blocks of stone measuring as much as fifty feet in length by sixteen in width and nine in thickness (Josephus, *Ant. Jud.* xv. 9, 6).

³ Agrippa, however, sent them three thousand soldiers.

⁴ A woman with crenellated crown, erect, bearing in her right hand an undefined object; coin of Nysa Scythopolis.

When the report of these events went abroad, the hatred of the Greeks, for a long time restrained, burst forth against this people, upon whom the wrath of Rome was of necessity about to fall. In the capital of Egypt fifty thousand Jews perished in a riot; in Caesarea twenty thousand; at Scythopolis thirteen thousand; at Damascus ten thousand; at Ascalon two thousand five hundred. All the cities of Syria, with the exception of Antioch, Apameia, and Sidon, witnessed similar massacres. Everywhere the populace resented the equality which the Senate had decreed between them and an odious race.¹ When the Jews of Palestine



COIN OF GAZA.²

beheld the arrival among them of those who had escaped these massacres, they were convinced that a plot had been formed to exterminate their race, and the insurrection at Jerusalem spread throughout the entire country. For the slaughter of the Jews in Syria that of the Greeks in Palestine was a retaliation. In Decapolis and Gaulonitis, at Philadelphia, Heshbon, Gerasa, Pella, Anthedon, Gaza, and many other cities, blood flowed in streams. The Greek population of Scythopolis escaped, employing the Jews established in the city to repulse their co-religionists, and then massacred the Jews.

Meanwhile the governor of Syria, Cestius Gallus, entered Judaea at the head of his troops. He reached Jerusalem in safety, and occupied the new city and the suburb of Bezetha. Assailed, however, by an overwhelming populace, he was forced to make a precipitate retreat, in which he lost six thousand men, his engines of war, and his baggage (October, 66). This success animated the most timid. Besides, since the massacres at Damascus and Alexandria, none had dared to speak of laying down their arms. Borne on by fear or by example, all, even the Essenes,³

¹ Ever since the time of Caesar privileges had been conferred upon the Jews at the expense of the Greeks.

² Diana and another divinity, standing in a distyle temple. Bronze coin of Hadrian, struck at Gaza. ΜΑΡΝΑ was the name of an ancient divinity of the city who has been identified with the Cretan Jupiter (Eckhel, *Doctr. num.* iii. 448-454).

³ According to Josephus (*Ant. Jud.* xviii. 1, 5) there were at that time not more than four thousand of the Essenes, who composed not so much a faction as a kind of religious order, into which admission was granted only after severe tests. They believed in the immortality of the soul, and not of the body; in the absolute will of God, and consequently denied the free-will

accepted this as a final struggle for independence. The Christians alone had nothing to do with these contentions in behalf of a temple and a country which they no longer recognized. Following the advice of their Master,¹ they withdrew from Jerusalem with their bishop, Simeon, and retired into the wilderness beyond the Jordan.² Their conduct in respect to Jerusalem they later repeated at Rome; these conquerors of souls and of heaven were unwilling to shut up their doctrine within the confines of a city or of a perishable empire.

A great assembly was held in the temple, after the retreat of Cestius, to elect leaders and organize resistance at all points. The chief persons now gave their adherence to the movement, and the moderate party accepted office. The historian Josephus, of the illustrious family of the Asmonaeans, a man reckoned among the least zealous, had one of the five jurisdictions into which the country was divided,—that of Galilee, which, from its wealth and population, was like a bulwark to Jerusalem. Josephus claims to have organized there a force of a hundred thousand men, whom he accustomed to Roman discipline. A sanhedrim or supreme council, sitting at Jerusalem, had the general direction of operations.

Notwithstanding the contempt professed by Nero for this rising of one of the most insignificant peoples of the Empire, the war was becoming serious. In this rugged and mountainous country, the assailant, despite the number and skill of his troops, could not make vigorous attacks upon impregnable cliffs defended by desperate men. King Agrippa, a tool of Rome, betrayed the cause of his people; but the Jews, who were scattered in great numbers

of man. They lived in common, without servants, and had no personal property. Their mode of life was austere; many took vows of celibacy. Every morning they plunged into water to purify themselves; their meals were preceded and followed by prayers. They never took an oath, deeming their affirmation sufficient. They shunned cities, yet required every man to have an employment, giving the preference to agriculture. This religious severity predisposed them to ecstasies and transports, and hence they believed in the gift of prophecy (Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* ii. 6; *Ant. Jud.* xiii. 11; xv. 10; xvii. 13. Cf. Derenbourg, *Hist. de la Pal.* chap. x.). An Essene named John was appointed to organize the opposition in the districts of Thamna, Lydda, Joppa, and Emmaus.

¹ *St. Luke*, xxi. 20; *St. Matt.* xxiv. 16; *St. Mark*, xiii. 14.

² Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.* iii. 3; Saint Epiphanius, *De Ponder. et Mensuris*, 18. They must have been very few in number at Jerusalem, for Josephus does not even mention the name. Yet M. Derenbourg (*op. cit.* p. 275) believes that the saying of Rabbi Simeon, then at Jerusalem, — “Doctrine is not the chief thing, but works,” — was directed against them, and particularly against the Paulinians.

throughout the East, were able to send assistance to their brethren, and probably to enlist the sympathies of some of the communities where they dwelt. We find Babylonians, Adiabeni, and Arabs among the defenders of Jerusalem. Josephus expressly declares, "the object was not so much to chastise the Jews as to retain the rest of the East in allegiance, by checking the disposition of



ARCH OF TRIUMPH OF GERASA.¹

all these nations to throw off the yoke of Rome."² This was in reality the opinion of Nero; and it was to his ablest general, Vespasian, that he intrusted the task of crushing this people which dared to disturb the repose of the world.³

¹ Album of the Duc de Luynes, pl. 44.

² He says again in his preface to the *Jewish War*: "The Roman Empire was then agitated by domestic discords. The Jews stirred up a great commotion in the East to take advantage of this occasion, so that whole nations were apprehensive of being brought into subjection to them, since they had summoned to their aid the Jews who dwelt beyond the Euphrates."

³ *Augebat iras*, says Tacitus, *quod soli Judaei non cessissent* (*Hist.* v. 10)

In the last months of the year 67 Vespasian entered Galilee at the head of more than sixty thousand soldiers. Palmyra had contributed skilled archers. Josephus concentrated his principal forces in Jotapata, and there withstood for forty-seven days all the efforts of Vespasian. When this place fell, the rest of Galilee soon submitted. But the wealthy province paid dearly for its dream of independence. The Romans were void of all pity, and from the first day the conflict assumed an atrocious character. Neither age nor sex was spared; if a few prisoners were taken, it was merely that they might be sent to labor at the cutting of the Isthmus of Corinth. The Jews themselves anticipated the enemy; they slew their wives and children, and killed themselves upon the dead bodies of their families. Forty defenders of Jotapata sought refuge, with their chief, in a cavern. The enemy offered to spare their lives, and Josephus desired to accept the proposal; but his companions threatened him with death if he took one step towards departing. He had no other alternative than to propose that they should decide by lot the order in which they should put each other to death. The one first designated was slain by the following one; he by the third; and so on to the last.¹ Josephus was left alone with one of his men, whom he obliged to follow him to the Roman camp, where, as a worthy culmination of this day of cowardice, he promised the Empire, in the name of heaven, to the persecutor of his race (67).

Scenes like these, and even more terrible, were to be enacted at Jerusalem; for the Jews, whose faith in another life had been so slow of growth, now thought that those who fell in battle or suffered punishment,² heroes and martyrs, enjoyed immortality. It was already the declaration of what Mahomet taught later, — “Paradise is in the shadow of swords.”

¹ Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* iii. 8, 7. I do not guarantee, of course, that this strange story, related by Josephus himself, is authentic. His vanity was doubly flattered by making this tragic narration, which represented him as miraculously saved by Providence.

² Tac., *Hist.* v. 5. The first clear notion of a life to come is to be found in the Book of the Maccabees, ii. 7, 9. Josephus, in the discourse which he claims to have delivered to the forty shut up with him in the cavern of Jotapata, says that those who die, after rendering unto God his due, enjoy eternal glory, that their race abides, and that their souls go to dwell in the holiest mansions of heaven, whence they again take up their abode in pure bodies, ἀγνοῖς πάλιν ἀντενοικίζονται σώμασιν. This was the belief in the immortality of the soul and metempsychosis which the Sadducees rejected.

The Zealots had become masters of the temple; and from this lofty position they held control of the city and deluged it with blood. The members of the family of Herod, with the most noble and wealthy citizens, were arrested on suspicion of desiring to make terms with the Romans. They were held as hostages; but it was feared they could not be retained, and one day the populace surrounded the prison while armed robbers entered it and slaughtered the captives. In their religious radicalism the Zealots would no longer recognize a sovereign pontiff chosen from the great sacerdotal families. They cast lots for this office; and a poor and ignorant Levite, who had never ventured beyond his own fields, was, in spite of himself, invested with the robe of the high-priest.

Meanwhile, the legitimate high-priest, Annas, attempted to rouse the courage of the peaceful citizens. His reproaches were for a



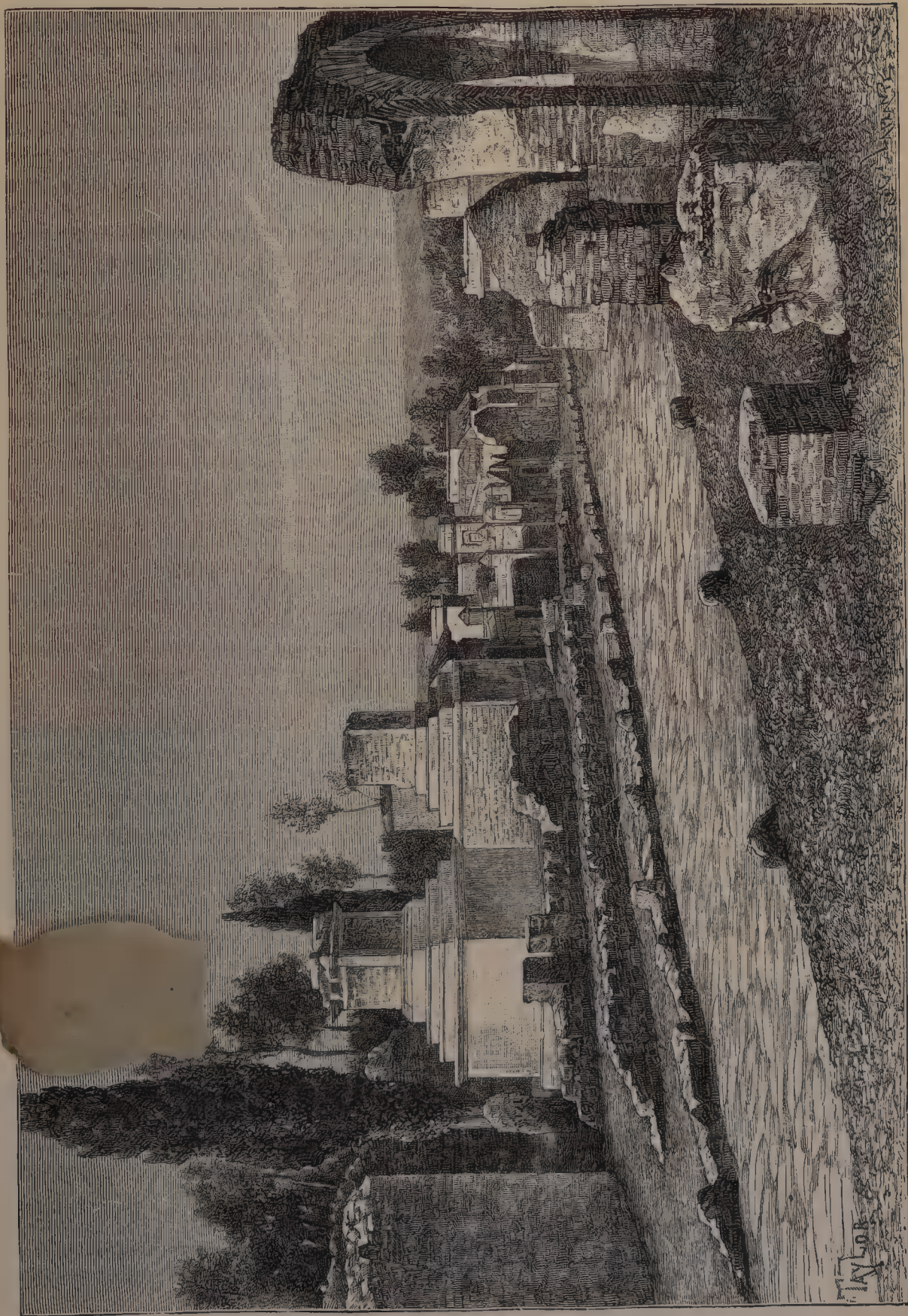
COIN OF ANNAS.¹

moment successful. The moderate party took up arms, and accepting the offered leadership of Annas, forced back the Zealots behind the second inclosure of the temple. There were now three hostile parties in Judaea,—the armed religious demagogues,

alike opposed to Rome and to the Jewish society; the defenders of the latter; and the Romans, hostile to both. As is usual in times of crisis, it was the moderate party which first succumbed.

By a determined effort the political party might have forced the refuge of the demagogues. Annas, who feared to defile with blood the holy place, contented himself with maintaining a negligent blockade. Many purchased substitutes for their military duty among the common people, who were in connivance with the enemies of the rich. Informed by their numerous spies of the facility with which the lines might be passed, the Zealots sent out emissaries, who reached the districts in the South, where they summoned the peasants (the Idumaeans) “to the defence of the house of God, which traitors sought to deliver up to the Romans.” A vast multitude hastened to surround Jerusalem. They were unable to force an entrance; but one night, during a violent storm which drove the sentinels to seek shelter, the Zealots descended

¹ A bunch of grapes and the date: “The first year of the Redemption of Israel.” On the reverse, “Annas, son of Annas,” and a palm-tree. Bronze.



THE ROAD OF THE TOMBS AT POMPEII.

from the temple into the city and opened the gates to the Idumaeans. Annas, hurrying forward at the first alarm, was slain. Many others perished, among whom were many of the higher class of priests and such of the rich as had no time to escape. "It was," said the assassins, "the wrath of God and of the people which



REMAINS OF THE OUTER WALL OF THE TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM.¹

rested heavily upon them." By day the demagogues filled the prisons; by night they emptied them, slaughtering the captives, whose bodies were thrown to the dogs. No one dared manifest his grief and tears. The poor alone and the worthless had nought to fear.²

¹ De Sauley, *Mémoire sur les divers appareils de maçonnerie employés dans l'enciente du Haram-ech-Chérif de Jérusalem*, in the *Mémoires de l'Acad. des inscript.*, vol. xxvi. pt. 1.

² Καὶ διέφυγεν οὐδεὶς, εἰ μὴ σφόδρα τις ἦν ταπεινός, ἢ δι' ἀγέλειαν, ἢ διὰ τύχην (Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* iv. 6, 1).

There was, however, one memorable instance of courage. The Zealots, in order to assume the appearance of justice, appointed a tribunal of seventy judges, before whom they dragged, as the first culprit, Zacharias, son of Baruch, a friend of Annas, charged with holding communication with Vespasian. He easily established his innocence, and reproached the victorious party for their usurpation and their crimes. Those present uttered cries of fury, and sought to slay him before the verdict. The Seventy unanimously acquitted the prisoner and discharged him, and he was assassinated a short distance from the tribunal. The judges, motionless on their seats, expected the same fate. They were driven from the inclosure of the temple, and withdrew amid outcries, insults, and blows.

Vespasian was aware of the situation at Jerusalem; and, letting the Jews slaughter one another there, he completed the sub-



COIN OF ELEAZAR.¹



COIN OF SIMON BEN GIORA.²

jugation of the country with intentional slowness, that he might, in the crisis of the Empire at that period, remain at the head of a considerable force. He employed the year 68 in bringing into submission, on the left bank of the Jordan, Peraea and several cities of Judaea. In the early months of 69 he invaded Idumaea, or Southern Palestine, captured Bethel and Ephraim, to the north of Jerusalem, which was thus surrounded by the enemy; and he was about to begin the siege of the holy city, when the troops proclaimed him Emperor on the 3d of July, 69; and for nearly a year the civil war diverted his attention from affairs in Judaea.

The respite afforded to the Jews by the elevation of Vespasian served only to increase their dissensions. Three factions, three armies, engaged in frequent conflicts at Jerusalem. John of Giscal, with the moderate party of the Zealots, held the exterior

¹ A wine-pitcher, branch of palm, and the name, "Eleazar the Priest." Reverse, a bunch of grapes and "First year of the Redemption of Israel." Silver coin.

² A bunch of grapes and the name "Simon." Reverse, a wine-pitcher, branch of palm, and "The Deliverance of Jerusalem." Silver.

inclosure of the temple and the approaches of Mount Moriah; Eleazar, leader of the assassins of the high-priest, was shut up in the temple itself; while Simon Ben Giora, with his bands of Idumaeans, occupied the upper city, or Hill of Zion. Each of these three chiefs aspired to be sole master of Jerusalem, to deliver it from the Romans, and then cause himself to be recognized as the Messiah to whom so great glory was promised. Eleazar, strongly posted in an impregnable position, made sorties which John was powerless to prevent, but which he avenged upon Simon, with whom he disputed the possession of the lower city. At the feast of the Passover Eleazar threw open to the faithful the entrance to the temple. John concealed armed men in the crowd, and after a sanguinary conflict forced his adversary to surrender. There was now one faction less. Two remained; and these, in the presence of a common enemy, at length ceased to fight among themselves.

In the spring of the year 70 Titus set out from Caesarea to open the fourth campaign against Jerusalem. He had four legions, with detachments from two others, twenty cohorts of auxiliaries, eight squadrons of cavalry, contingents from Agrippa, Sohemus, king of Ituraea, and Antiochus, also some Arab bands,—in all believed to be about eighty thousand men. The exterior bulwarks of the city had already fallen, and the investment of Jerusalem was the object of the campaign about to begin. To oppose the besieging army, the Jews had a force of about twenty-four thousand troops; and in addition, every man in the city was ready to serve in such desultory warfare as the occasion might demand. The siege, which lasted five months, is one of the most memorable in ancient history, and the one best known to us, since Josephus, who was an eye-witness, relates it at great length. The works of the Romans were immense, and the resistance of the Jews equal or superior to anything that heroism has ever elsewhere dictated. Titus, approaching from the north, established his first camp on the ridge Scopus, the city lying in view below him, and the third wall (see plan) being the object of his first attack. Six weeks of furious combats, mines and countermines, and the construction of enormous earthworks, were required before the Roman general made himself master of this outer wall and entered victoriously the suburb Bezetha. But another rampart still defended the city;

and it was determined to change the siege into a blockade, a line of circumvallation being drawn, which was completed by three days' work of the entire army. The supply of provisions now began to



TITUS VESPASIANUS.¹

fail in the besieged town; destitution became extreme; and Josephus relates that a mother was detected about to eat the sodden flesh of her own child. Multitudes sought to escape out of the city, and besought the Romans to allow them to depart as non-

¹ Bust of the Capitol, No. 22.

combatants; but Titus refused, and even went so far as to crucify great numbers who in the attempt to flee had fallen into his hands. Meanwhile he vigorously attacked the second wall and the citadel Antonia, endeavoring from time to time, by messages, to persuade the inhabitants to capitulate. The city was filled with reports of supernatural warnings and omens of evil; but the leaders refused to listen, and the greater the distress the more certain they still believed the deliverance. Again and again the Romans attacked the walls, and were as often repulsed. Finally, after the

ARCH OF TITUS AT ROME.¹

siege had already lasted three months, Titus carried the tower Antonia by surprise, and it was at once destroyed, with the exception of one wing, reserved as a watch-tower; the Lower City was also destroyed, and preparations were made to attack the temple. Again Titus urged the Jews to surrender. "The Lord will protect his house," was the undaunted rejoinder of John; and the captives who had been taken when the Lower City was demolished, having

¹ [This arch was erected to Titus after his death, *Divo Tito*. Another had been built to him during his life, but has disappeared. Its inscription, however, is preserved, — a hymn of triumph in the lapidary style: *Urbem Hierosolyman omnibus ante se ducibus, regibus, gentibus aut frustra petitam, aut omnino intemptatam delevit* (C. I. L. vi. 944). — ED.]

been sent to stand before the gates of the temple and plead with the besieged to yield, the Jewish leader turned his engines upon them, until the ground was strewn with their dead bodies.

Titus now gave the signal for the assault upon the temple itself, attacking from the northern side, where the destruction of the fortress and of the outer bulwarks had left it exposed. A great portico was soon in flames; and shortly after, John and Simon, with a band of their most trusty followers, escaped from the temple and took refuge in the Upper City. Titus steadily advanced;



TRIUMPH OF TITUS.¹

and amid the fiercest fighting, and with the flames on every side, at last made his way into the sacred building. It was his wish to save it; but a soldier, climbing on his comrades' shoulders, threw a piece of burning wood into one of the galleries. The whole interior of the building was at once wrapped in flames; and the Roman general regretfully withdrew.

The Upper City still held out; further attempts at persuasion were vainly tried. Rapine and murder reigned unchecked within the walls, and outside, the blockade was still maintained. Finally, the defence was abandoned; Titus stormed and captured the Upper

¹ Bas-relief from his Arch of Triumph.

City, and gave directions that it should be razed to the ground. John and Simon, who had attempted to escape through underground galleries, were taken; and so the appalling drama ended.

By the computation of Josephus, — who, it is true, exaggerates all figures, — eleven hundred thousand Jews must have perished, half of this number in Jerusalem. Ninety-seven thousand were made prisoners, some of whom were sold, others sent to the quarries in Egypt, and the remainder reserved for the combats of the circus. Some recompense had to be made to the Syrian cities for their fidelity; and Titus gave them games and festivals, in which



SPOILS OF THE TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM. — THE SEVEN-BRANCHED CANDLESTICK, ETC.¹

he exhibited to them the hated Jews torn to pieces in the arena by wild beasts, or killing each other like gladiators. At Panaeas, to celebrate his brother's festival, he caused twenty-five hundred of them to perish in the flames or in the amphitheatre, and as many more at Berytus on the anniversary of the birth of Vespasian. Titus reserved but seven hundred to follow at Rome the car on which Vespasian and himself made their triumphal entry. Borne in front of them the captives beheld the spoils of the temple, — the golden table, the seven-branched candlestick, the veils of the

¹ Bas-relief of the Arch of Titus.

sanctuary, and the book of the law.¹ At their head walked the two chiefs, John and Simon. The latter, after the festivities, was conducted to the Forum, where he was beaten with rods, and afterwards beheaded. The former died in prison. Medals struck to commemorate this war represent a woman, in tears, seated at the foot of a palm-tree, with this inscription: *Judaea captive*.²

She was indeed captive, and for ever! Of the temple there remained only a mass of ruins; of the holy city, a few walls

blackened by fire;³ and of the Jewish people, a remnant scattered through the provinces, where hatred always followed them. Vespasian had already united Judaea to his domain, and ordered all the Jews of the Empire to pay henceforth into the treasury of Jupiter Capitolinus the two drachmas per head which they had been accustomed to send annually to the temple of Jerusalem.⁴



JUDAEA CAPTIVE.⁵

War had now destroyed, almost at the same time, the two

sanctuaries of the religious beliefs which divided the world between them. But while one was destined soon to rise again, glittering with gold, the other was to remain forever prostrate, and for the

¹ These are still to be seen sculptured on the arch of triumph erected at Rome in memory of this event, and under which, it is said, for eighteen centuries no Jew has willingly passed. "It is to be hoped, for the honor of the Jews, that this is true; long memories are suited to long misfortunes" (Mme. de Staël, *Corinne*, chap. iv.).

² Eckhel, *Doctr. num.* vi. 326.

³ However, Titus left standing the three towers, Hippicus, Phasaël, and Mariamne, the artificial mountain (Haram-ech-Cherif) which supported the temple and is yet visible, as well as several other ruins clearly of Hebrew construction. The Romans afterwards placed a garrison of eight hundred men on Mount Zion. They had found in their pillage an amount of wealth so vast that, according to the account of Josephus, the value of gold deteriorated one half throughout Syria.

⁴ Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* vii. 6. A colony was established at Caesarea, whose inhabitants were exempt from this tax, and later, under Titus, from the land-tax (*Digest*, l. 15, 8). Besides the garrison sent to Jerusalem, the Empire maintained troops in Palestine; and as if the country were "in a state of siege," we find Domitian, in 86, keeping in camp there soldiers of twenty-five years' service. To these he accorded the privileges of veterans, but without the *honesta missio*, that is, without disbanding them. Cf. L. Renier, *Diplômes milit.* p. 220.

⁵ *Trésor de Num.*

reason that it was now no longer needed. The idea which it had kept secret in the Holy of Holies had gone forth to be diffused over the world; and by it the conquered of to-day will be the victors of to-morrow.¹ The fugitives will become the conquerors; those whom men thought to crush by force will obtain dominion by the spirit; and the Jewish God, driven by Titus from the Temple of Jerusalem, will enter as master into the Capitol of Rome, out of which Jupiter and all "the great gods" will have been hurled. Tacitus says that before the last assault the gates of the temple opened of themselves, that a supernatural voice was heard crying out, "Let us depart!" and at the same time there was all the noise of a departure.² It was the Mosaic Jehovah, transfigured by Jesus, who quitted his solitary rock of Zion to become the God of the whole world, and to cause to reign in it through the ages, with the second revealed law, a new theocracy, full of mildness towards its own, implacable as the Jewish towards its adversaries. But the struggle was destined to recommence some day in the bosom of the renascent world; for the two races which have just furnished us this terrible spectacle represent two contrary tendencies of our nature, and their opposition is unceasing, — faith against reason, enthusiasm against science, religion against politics, divine right against natural right.

III. — VESPASIAN (69-79).

THE two wars which we have just described have detained us at the extremities of the Empire; let us now go back to Rome, which we left on the day after the death of Vitellius, its Capitol in ashes and its streets blocked with dead bodies. The conflicts which had stained it with blood were the expiring convulsions of an anarchy of two years' duration. Beginning in Gaul and Spain, when the downfall of the house of the Caesars had occasioned that great void in which the Empire had been well-nigh overwhelmed, the shock had been communicated to Germany and Illyria, and thence to Syria, Judaea, and Egypt, and civil war "had passed

¹ Saint Augustine (*De Civ. Dei*, vi. 11): *victi victoribus leges dedere.*

² *Hist* v. 13.

over the world like a terrible expiation.”¹ Yet the spirit of revolt, after having agitated all the legions and all the provinces, was now about to subside and become extinguished for want of nutriment; and the Empire, like some great body, at the cost of a violent commotion, had thrown off the evil which tortured it. It retained the disturbing cause; but, for a time at least, calm and vigor were to return. There was indeed no longer an emperor to make, nor legions to be bought. Vespasian was accepted by the chiefs and by the armies, by the troops of the East who had chosen him, by the partisans of Galba, whose statues he had restored, and by the Othonians, to whom he furnished an opportunity to blot out the disgrace of Bedriacum. As for the old legions of Germany, destroyed or dispersed, they had now no influence. Accordingly, every one at this time was ready for peace; and the Senate made haste to decree to the conqueror the honors and rights which con-



COINS OF TITUS AND OF DOMITIAN,
PRINCES OF THE YOUTH.³

stituted the imperial authority, — those which had been successively granted to preceding Emperors.² At the same time his two sons, Titus and Domitian, were created Caesars and Princes of the Youth, while to Mucianus were given the ornaments of the triumph “for his victory over the Sarmatians.”

Delayed by contrary winds, and especially by a prudence which was unwilling to incur any risk, Vespasian was still in Egypt when he learned of the victory of Cremona and the death of his rival. These successes, gained so far away, produced a great effect in that Eastern land so filled with superstitions. Rendered credulous by all that he had witnessed in this land of wonders and by this realization of the interested prophecies of the Jew Josephus, Vespasian began to regard himself as especially favored of the gods, or found it useful to encourage that belief. Apollonius of Tyana, a man rendered subject to visions by his rigorous asceticism, was then at Alexandria. His journeys through the mysterious land of the Brahmins, his endless wanderings over the whole Empire,

¹ Tac., *Hist.* iv. 3: *Civilia bella . . . omnes provincias exercitusque lustraverant velut expiatio terrarum orbe.*

² Tac., *Hist.* iv. 3. This is the famous *lex regia*, the text of which has been recovered, and is now everywhere accessible. Cf. Orelli, *Inscr.* i. 567.

³ *Cabinet de France.*

aroused, wherever he might tarry, a curiosity which he was very careful not to exhaust by too long a stay. If he was not already regarded as a god, as contemporaries of Alexander Severus declare, at least he was thought to foretell the future. Vespasian sought an opportunity of hearing him; more than that, he himself had visions sent from on high; and, to complete the resemblance to the promised king, with whom the Eastern imagination was at this time filled, he performed miracles; he healed, in public assembly, a blind man and a paralytic. In the East the marvellous is always necessary; it is the means of action which most seldom fails of its end; and men's minds accept it so readily that the man who practises it sometimes becomes the dupe of his own artifice or his own visions. Then Eastern forms of speech, so full of boldness and metaphor, add the exaggeration of words to the exaggeration of things, so that a fact is very speedily transferred from the natural order to the supernatural. The truth, hidden under this double covering, which the eye of the people never penetrates, is rarely discovered again, and it matters little. Let Vespasian work miracles; let even the Alexandrians, Suetonius, Tacitus, and Dion believe that he performed them:¹ we shall only remark that in that country and amid those occurrences, such conduct was politic, — doubtless not with the policy that we admire, but with that which always succeeds. Serapis also, the great deity of the Alexandrians, sanctioned by sure presages the fortune of this new-comer; and the plebeian Emperor was able to carry back to Rome, for lack of the illustrious lineage of the Caesars, his adoption by the gods. It was a well-managed affair.

His sojourn in Egypt was not entirely in vain with respect to serious concerns. He made useful reforms in the administration

¹ *Multa miracula evenere quis coeli favor et quaedam in Vespasianum inclinatio numinum* (Tac., *Hist.* iv. 81; Suet., *Vesp.* 7; Dion, lxvi. 8). See, later, the last moments of Vespasian.

² Bust of white agate, two and three tenths inches high (*Cabinet de France*, No. 278).



SERAPIS, CARRYING A MODIUS.²

of that country, which had not beheld an Emperor since Augustus, and he augmented, notwithstanding the raillery of the Alexandrians, the taxes imposed on that rich city.¹ From there he kept watch over Judaea, Asia, and Africa. Vologeses offered him forty thousand mounted men; but he refused them. To quell the insurrection in Pontus he required only a few cohorts of vexillaries.² In Africa he exchanged with the legate Valerius Festus, commander of the military forces in Numidia, secret messages, which led to the latter's defection. The proconsul who administered this senatorial province hoped, it was said, to profit by the general disorder so far as to obtain the Empire himself. He was of the illustrious family of the Pisos, and brother-in-law of another member of that house whom Mucianus had recently put to death. The legate's cavalry, coming from their station to Carthage, relieved Vespasian of this possible rival. Africa being now in subjection, an attempt was made to re-establish there some degree of order. Leptis and Oea were at war, like Lugdunum and Vienna in Gaul, like Puteoli and Capua in Italy, like all the towns of Sicily, and like many others in the provinces. The people of Oea, aided by the Garamantes, were ravaging with frightful excesses the territory of Leptis;³ cohorts of cavalry were sent out which restored the *Pax Romana*. Along the Danube the Sarmatians and Dacians had devastated Moesia after the withdrawal of the legions. Mucianus, opportunely arriving with the army of Asia, drove them back beyond the river; but after his departure they resumed their depredations. Vespasian at once despatched Rubrius Gallus, who delivered Moesia and carefully fortified both banks of the river.⁴ Thus, before the termination of the civil war, Vespasian inaugurated his reign by establishing peace in the provinces and on the frontiers.

It was his intention to await the ending of the war in Judaea in order to return to Rome with Titus. But the siege of Jerusalem being so unexpectedly prolonged, he set out, visiting on his way Rhodes and various cities of Asia Minor. He landed in Italy at the extreme point of Calabria, found Mucianus and nearly all the Senate at Brundisium, and Domitian at Beneventum with a part of the people. Vitellius had now been dead nearly a year. This

¹ Dion, lxvi. 8; Suet., *Vesp.* 19.

² Tac., *Hist.* iii. 48.

³ Tac., *Hist.* iv. 50; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* v. 5.

⁴ Tac., *Hist.* iii. 46.

time had been well employed. Two dangerous wars had been brought to a close, the distracted Empire had again found quiet and order. Of the recent agitation the only traces remaining were the ruins of the Capitol and a great desire for rest. Mucianus was largely instrumental in this return to peace. He was at once the Maecenas and the Agrippa of the new Augustus; and the Emperor had also given to him the imperial signet-ring, that he might act everywhere in his master's name. Leaving Vespasian in that distance which magnifies grandeur and increases respect, Mucianus had assumed the thankless task of checking the reaction against the vanquished, of again bringing the victors under the yoke of discipline, of remanding to obscurity the hero of the civil war, and of holding Domitian in restraint. After the murder of Vitellius, of his son, of his brother Lucius, and of Asiaticus, the most odious of his freedmen, who perished on the cross, and also of a Piso whose popularity caused uneasiness,¹ Mucianus had put an end to political executions. The daughter of Vitellius was spared; when Helvidius Priscus and Musonius Rufus denounced the informers, he allowed sentence to be passed in a few instances, and then stopped these prosecutions, which were often attended with danger. Antonius Primus loudly vaunted his services, and had already rewarded himself by laying hands on the imperial treasury and on the house of the Emperor, as if they had been the spoils of Cremona.³ Mucianus treated him with great consideration. He caused the consular ornaments to be decreed to him, and granted favors to all his friends; but he took away all power from him, and induced him to go to meet Vespasian, who received him with honor, but bestowed upon him no further authority.⁴ The



DOMITIAN, CROWNED
WITH LAUREL.²

¹ Julius Priscus, praetorian prefect under Vitellius, killed himself (Tac., *Hist.* iv. 2).

² Cameo of the *Cabinet de France*, No. 241. Agate-onyx of two layers, .78 of an inch in length by .58 of an inch in breadth. It is set in a ring.

³ Tac., *Hist.* iv. 2.

⁴ Tac., *Hist.* iv. 80. Mucianus sent away from Rome the troops devoted to Primus, and prevented Domitian from taking him into his house (*inter comites*).

war with the Gauls came very opportunely to deliver Italy from embarrassing armies; there still remained at Rome the disbanded praetorians of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, and the Flavian legionaries, to whom enrolment in the praetorian cohorts had been promised. As Mucianus made little haste to respond to all these demands, a riot broke out; he quelled it, offered the soldiers lands which they did not want, and ended by admitting them all to the praetorium. But after the service had been reorganized, he quietly dismissed, one by one, those who had passed the prescribed age or had committed some fault.

Domitian occasioned him more anxiety. This young prince, nineteen years of age, had been in the Capitol with Sabinus, and had only escaped by means of a disguise. On account of the danger he had incurred, he thought himself one of the victors, and affected sovereign airs. In one day he distributed twenty places. Vespasian wrote to him, "I must esteem myself happy that you have not thought of appointing an emperor also."¹ When the revolt of the Gauls became known, Domitian, jealous of his brother, left Rome, proposing to take command of the army. Mucianus, not daring to leave him, went also; but at the foot of the Alps they learned of the defeat of Treveri, upon which Mucianus represented to the young Caesar that there would be little glory in going to finish a war which was ending of itself, and persuaded him to stop at Lugdunum. It is believed that from this place Domitian secretly sounded Cerialis, to ascertain whether the command would be transferred to him in case he should repair to the army. Cerialis avoided a reply; and Domitian, perceiving with chagrin that these old statesmen were making sport of him, withdrew from all affairs, and henceforth appeared occupied only with verses and literature.² His skilful tutor brought him back to Rome, from which place both went to meet the Emperor.

Unfortunately Tacitus again fails us here, and this time completely. Nothing has been saved of his *Histories* from the middle of the year 70, and we find ourselves reduced to the dry biographies of Suetonius, the fragments of Dion, and the abridgments of Aurelius Victor and Eutropius. The majestic stream from which we have drawn, which hitherto flowed with brimming banks, is now only a

¹ Suet., *Dom.* 1.

■ Tac., *Hist.* iv. 86.

slender thread of water. Of all the Emperors, Vespasian is the one who loses the most by this; for he was, says Saint Augustine, a very good prince, and very worthy of being beloved.¹

He came into power when he was sixty years old, — an age when a man is no longer given to change. He had never been fond of gaming or debauchery, and he preserved his health by a frugal diet, even passing one day every month without eating. His life was simple and laborious. When Emperor he always employed a portion of the night in public affairs; the elder Pliny and many others came before day to work with him; and finally, Thrasea and Soranus, the most virtuous members of the Senate, were his friends.² This soldier accustomed to discipline, this man from humble life who had known want, was truly the emperor required by the times. In the imperial palace he made no change in his habits, lived, as before, like a simple private citizen, his door open to all, without remembering injuries,³ and without pride; laughing at those who desired to make out a genealogy for him, and replying to sarcasms by pleasantries which, if coarse, were better certainly than a sentence of exile or of death; capable of gratitude, — a rare thing in a prince; bearing to hear the truth and counsel.⁴ He gave a magnificent dowry to the daughter of Vitellius, took away none of their paternal estate from the children of those who had fought against him,⁵ and allowed Mucianus, whom he twice decorated with the consular purple, to assume the tone and manner of a colleague rather than of a minister; yet he was without weakness, even for his son Domitian, whom he held in strict dependence. In accordance with traditions of the first imperial court, he received the nobles familiarly, and visited them at their homes without formal preparation. At one time the attempt was made to render him uneasy in respect

¹ *De Civ. Dei*, v. 21. Suetonius (*Vesp.* 8) says of him: *Per totum imperii tempus nihil habuit antiquius, quam prope afflictam nutantemque rempublicam stabilire primo, deinde et ornare.* Aur. Victor (*De Caes.* 9) speaks in the same manner: *Exsanguem diu fessumque terrarum orbem brevi refecit.*

² Tac., *Hist.* iv. 7; Suet., *Vesp.* 20, 21; Pliny, *Epist.* iii. 5.

■ One of Nero's freedmen, who had insulted Vespasian during the lifetime of Nero, came and asked pardon; Vespasian repeated the insult to him, and with a laugh dismissed him. A senator and a knight having quarrelled, the former accused the latter of having brought reproach upon his rank. The Emperor decided that it was not lawful to attack a senator with scurrilous language, but that it was fair to return it (Suet., *Vesp.* 9).

⁴ *Patientissimus veri* (Tac., *De Orat.* 3). Cf. Suet., *Vesp.* 13.

■ Suet., *Vesp.* 14.

to a person to whom the stars had promised the Empire; Vespasian thereupon gave him the consulship. "If he becomes emperor," said he, "he will remember that I conferred a favor on him."

Vespasian has not attained a lofty fame; he is known chiefly by the anecdotes of Suetonius and Dion. After carefully examining his acts, if we say that he took Augustus for a model, we shall give him all the eulogy which his ability as a statesman deserves. He had no higher aim than to establish order in the state and in the finances. But he accomplished this; and if his reign, like all the others, made no preparations for the future, it did much for the present. It was a restorative reign, whose effects were felt for several generations; this service is as valuable as the most brilliant victories.

Following the example of the second Julius, the first of the Flavians resolved to seek in the Senate the support of his government. This assembly, debased by so many years of tyranny, needed, as much as it did a century before, to be submitted to a severe revision. Moreover, civil wars, intrigues, and debauchery had so reduced the ranks of the nobility that, if we may believe an old historian, only two hundred *gentes* could at that time be enumerated at Rome. This exhausting of the aristocratic blood seemed perilous with regard to the gods, some of whose altars were about to be left desolate; and in the eyes of the people there resulted from it a diminution of the prestige of the city, which, like the England of our day, honored the families of the great and admired their lavish expenditure. Vespasian acted with resolution. Invested with the title of censor in 73,¹ with his son Titus for colleague, he struck from the rolls of the two orders the members deemed unworthy, replaced them by the most distinguished persons of the Empire, and, by virtue of his powers as pontifex maximus, raised several of them to the patriciate. A thousand Italian or provincial families came to be added to the two hundred aristocratic families which had survived, and constituted with these the higher Roman society, from which the candidates for all civil, military, and religious functions were taken.² A proof of the extreme

¹ Borghesi, *Œuvres*, i. 181.

² Suetonius says (*Vesp.* 9): *Amplissimos ordines exhaustos caede varia . . . supplevit . . . honestissimo . . . Italicorum ac provincialium allecto*. Aur. Victor (*De Caes.* 9) states more

care which Vespasian exercised in really choosing, as Suetonius and Aurelius Victor express it, "the best," is that in the number of those whom he appointed patricians were Agricola, father-in-law of Tacitus, a man from Narbonensis, the Spaniard Trajan, the Gaul Antoninus, — one the father, the other the grandfather, of famous Emperors;¹ and that he was the first to recognize the ability of Tacitus,² of the Cornutus Tertullus mentioned by the younger Pliny with such high commendation,³ of Licinius Sura, whom Trajan made almost his colleague, of the Moor Lusius Quietus, one of the most skilful generals of that epoch; in fact, of so many others, old Romans or new men, whom he sought out in all conditions and in all the provinces. Claudius had understood that this mode of recruiting the Senate was a necessity of the imperial government; Nero himself had summoned to high functions the Aquitanian Vindex and Tiberius Alexander, an apostate Jew; but no emperor since Caesar had employed this liberal policy so broadly as Vespasian.

It is to be regretted that we have no information concerning this renewal of the Roman nobility, — an important event, the echo of which is found under Domitian in the lines of Statius,⁴ and whose sequel was the prosperous epoch of the Antonines. This aristocracy, drawn by Vespasian from the provincial cities, where

precisely, — *Lectis undique optimis viris mille gentes compositae, quum ducentas aegerrime reperisset, extinctis saevitia tyrannorum plerisque*. In this phrase *gentes* cannot be taken to mean "patrician families." At the time of Aur. Victor the very name of patrician, in the antique sense of the word, had disappeared, since it is found for the last time in the edict of Diocletian upon the *maximum*, and Gaius had long before said that the *gentilicium jus* no longer existed. Hadrian's secretary, who was well acquainted with the reform of Vespasian, does not speak of *gentes*; and his reasoning indicates that the patriciate, not being obligatory except for certain religious functions, there was no need to be lavish of a title still greatly respected, — since the Emperors assumed it at their accession, — but of very little account in the state. This lavish bestowal had lessened the value of it at a time when political reasons advised the preservation of its illustrious character. Aur. Victor, in *De Vir. ill.* 14, employs indifferently the words *gens* and *familia*; his thousand *gentes*, then, were a thousand families called to Rome, — a part for the Senate, a part for the equestrian order, some for the patriciate, others for offices and ranks (*allectus inter praetorios*), etc.

¹ Tac., *Agric.* 9: *Inter patricos adscivit*. Capitolinus, *Ant. Pius*, 1, and *Anton. Philos.* 1.

² Tac., *Hist.* i. 1.

³ *Epist.* v. 15. Cornutus had been *allectus inter praetorios* by Vespasian during his censorship (Orelli, No. 3,659). We may cite also C. Fulvius Servilianus, who had exercised the highest magistracy at Nemausus (Herzog, p. 123); Q. Aur. Pactumius Clemens, of Cirta, the first African honored with the consulship (L. Renier, *Inscr. de l'Alg.*, Nos. 1,807 and 1,808); C. Salv. Liberalis Nonius Bassus, who was four times *quinquennalis* and the patron of Pollentia, but who resided at Rome, where he became known as an advocate (Borghesi, iii. 178); the Spaniard Herennius Senecio, etc.

⁴ *Silv.* iii. 3, 143: . . . *In cuneos populum quum duxit equestres*.

it had been trained to public affairs, where it had formed a taste for economy, simplicity, and order, brought into Rome the pure morals unknown to the descendants of the Republican proconsuls, that "gilded youth" whose scandalous libertinism we have seen under Nero. From this aristocracy were to come the great emperors of the second century, the able lieutenants who seconded them, and senators, hereafter conspiring only at long intervals, because, at last forgetting Brutus and Cato, whose statues no longer stand in the halls of these new houses, they will rarely yield to the

temptations which famous names, the influence of wealth, and the fatality of great memories offered to their predecessors.



M. ULPIUS TRAJANUS.¹

To the Senate, thus renewed, and become the true representative body of the Empire, Vespasian submitted all important matters. He was present regularly at the discussions; and when he addressed a message to the Fathers, it was one of his sons, and not his quaestor, who went to read it. By his generosity he made up to several senators the census required, and established in aid of the poor of consular

rank an annual fund of five hundred thousand sesterces.²

Suetonius renders him this testimony, — that it would be difficult to mention a single individual unjustly punished in his reign, unless it were done in his absence or without his knowledge.³ He loved to dispense justice himself in the Forum; and in order to settle the arrears of the civil war by a speedy termination of the innumerable cases which crowded the rolls of the centumviri, he instituted a commission of judges drawn by lot, to restore what

¹ Bust of the father of the Emperor, crowned with laurel, on lapis-lazuli. Mutilated cameo, .86 of an inch by .78; to whom attributed is uncertain (*Cabinet de France*, No. 239 of the Catalogue).

² Suet., *Vesp.* 17.

³ Suet., *Vesp.* 15. "He deplored," he adds, "even the most just punishments." An author of the seventh century, John of Antioch, who seems to have drawn from good authorities, says also: . . . Οὕτως ἦν ἡπίος καὶ προσηγνὴς ὥς μηδὲ τὰς εἰς αὐτὸν τε καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν γινομένας ἀμαρτίας πέρα τιμωρεῖσθαι φυχῆς . . . (*Fragm. Hist. Graec.* iv. 578, ed. Didot). Suidas (v. Βεσπασιανός) and Eutropius (vii. 13) say that Vespasian is worthy to be compared with the best princes who have ever reigned: . . . *optimis comparandus*. [The case of J. Sabinus, the Gaul, and his wife Eponina, already related, is a sad exception.—ED.]

had been seized unlawfully in the late disorders. In the same spirit he destroyed all the treasury certificates, so as to inherit nothing from those unhappy times.

The legions, who had made and unmade five emperors in two years, were no longer obedient to the ancient discipline. He brought them back to it; and putting in practice the words of Galba, he chose his soldiers, and did not buy them. The mutinous were expelled from the army; and even the conquerors waited long for the promised rewards.¹

The morals of the times were bad; he did more than make laws to reform them, — he set good examples. A young man coming much perfumed to thank him for the gift of a prefecture, he turned away from him with an air of disgust, saying in a stern voice, “I had rather you smelt of garlic;” and revoked his appointment. Cato could not have done it better. Accordingly, Tacitus dates from this reign a salutary change. “Vespasian,” he says, “at his table and in his garments recalled ancient simplicity. The desire to please and to resemble the Emperor accomplished more than laws, punishments, and fear.”


 VESPASIAN.²

In his work of restoration he included, after the example of Augustus, the official worship; and he also attempted to rekindle expiring piety. We can only catch a glimpse of this reform in the obscurity which envelops the entire history of this Emperor. But he labored to this end; for inscriptions, which are still to be read, celebrate him as “the restorer of the ancient rites, religious ceremonies, and sacred edifices.”³ One of the temples which he built was dedicated to a strange divinity, the Emperor Claudius;

¹ The soldiers of the fleet petitioned for shoes, on account of the frequent journeys they had to make from Puteoli or Ostia to Rome; he obliged them to go barefoot (Suet., *Vesp.* 8).

■ *Trésor de Num.* pl. 20, No. 9.

³ Cf. Orelli, Nos. 746, 1,460, 1,868, 2,364. Vespasian had, in his turn, his priests, *sodales* and *seviri Flaviales* (*Id.*, Nos. 2,370 and 2,375).

but Claudius was the author of Vespasian's prosperity: besides, having been made *divus*, the late Emperor had a right to his priests and altars; it was according to law.

Vespasian was not fond of public shows, especially those of gladiators; and in the whole Empire he gave permission only to the Ephesians to institute new games. But he multiplied the number of buildings, wishing, again like Augustus, to have the people gain their living by labor. An engineer agreed to convey some immense columns into the Capitol at a small expense; Vespasian ordered a large sum to be paid him, but declined his proposal, saying: "Suffer me to find maintenance for the poor people."¹ Immediately on his return to his capital the Emperor set to work with such ardor that at the expiration of a few months "the streets of Rome, rendered impassable by the misfortune of the times," were



THIRD TEMPLE OF THE
CAPITOL, BUILT BY
VESPASIAN.⁵

again in good condition.² The same solicitude extended to the provinces.³ He repaired the aqueducts; enlarged the springs which supplied the fountains of Rome;⁴ and, to remove the ruins which had encumbered the city since the great conflagration of Nero, he permitted any man to occupy vacant ground and build upon it, if the owners had neglected to do so. The reconstruction of the Capitol had been begun by his orders, but the work progressed slowly. When he returned, he himself put his hand to the task of clearing away the rubbish, and carried stones upon his shoulder. After this, no man dared refuse to work. Three thousand tables of brass, on which were engraved the senatus-consulta and the plebiscita relating to the alliances, treaties, and privileges granted

¹ Suet., *Vesp.* 18.

² Inscription of the year 71 (Orelli, No. 742) voted by the Senate: . . . *quod vias urbis negligentia super. tempor. corruptas impensa sua restituit.*

³ An inscription of Thyatira, in Asia Minor, of the year 75, bears: *Vias faciendas curavit* (C. I. L. vol. iii. No. 470).

⁴ . . . *aquas Curtiam et Caeruleam sua impensa urbi restituit* (Orelli, No. 55).

⁵ On this coin are very distinctly seen the six Corinthian columns of the *façade*, the statues of the three divinities of the Capitol, Jupiter seated between Minerva and Juno, who are standing. The tympanum presents the same figures in the same disposition, two men striking the anvil at the angles. At the summit of the pediment is the quadriga which adorned the previous edifices (Saglio, *Dict. des Antiq.* p. 903 and fig. 1,148).

to different peoples, had been destroyed in the burning of the temple. He ordered search to be made everywhere for copies of the acts, and reconstructed the archives of the national history. Augustus had erected two altars to Peace: Vespasian built a temple to her, in which he deposited the most precious spoils of Jerusalem;¹ and in order the better to show to the world his pacific intentions, the old general closed, for the sixth time, the doors of the temple of Janus. He built a Forum surrounded by colonnades, in addition to those already existing, and began in the centre of the city the vast Amphitheatre, a mountain of stone, whose enormous ruins strike the beholder with amazement and admiration. Eighty-seven thousand spectators were accommodated on its gigantic tiers. The colossal statue of Nero near by, which Vespasian consecrated to the Sun, gave the new building its name, the Colosseum. He extended the pomoerium; it was a right given him by his victories.²

In Italy he excavated a tunnel under a mountain, to give a more gentle descent to the Flaminian Way, and he rebuilt at Herculaneum the temple of the Mother of the Gods, which had been thrown down by an earthquake.⁴ The Emperor attempted to stop the continual encroachments of private persons on the public domain: at Rome he ordered the College of Pontiffs to make one of these investigations;⁵ at Pompeii he sent a tribune



MINERVA, FOUND NEAR THE TEMPLE OF PEACE.³

¹ The temple of Peace, dedicated by Vespasian in 77, was destroyed by fire under Commodus. It seems that Constantine substituted his basilica for it.

² *Auctis P. R. finibus, pomoerium ampliaverunt terminaveruntque* (C. I. L. vol. vi. No. 1,232).

³ Statue of the Vatican, *Mus. Pio-Clem.* pl. 9.

⁴ Orelli, No. 744, in the year 76.

⁵ *Id.*, No. 3,261.

to measure the localities, hear the complaints, and render to the city what pertained to it.¹ Vesuvius was soon to bring forever into harmony both owners and trespassers, by taking all unto itself, even the road of tombs which leads to the buried city. In the provinces he rebuilt at his own expense cities destroyed by earthquakes or by fire. He constructed roads without interfering with the bordering proprietors;² he erected useful monuments; and terminated the disputes of communities with reference to their boundaries.

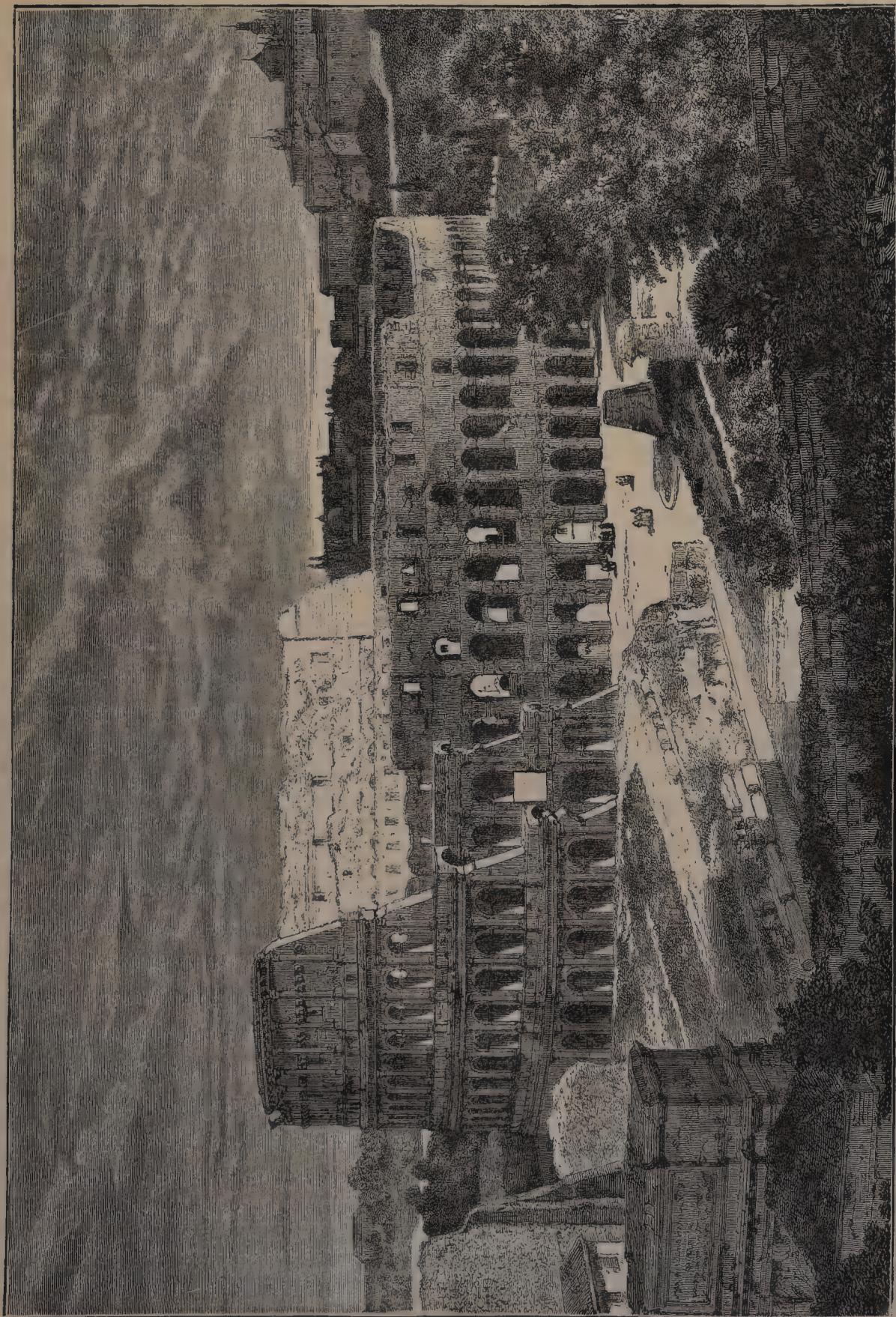
It is not, therefore, clear why Suetonius, after enumerating his expenditures, of which some were necessities and others benefactions, should have addressed to him the reproach which clings to his memory still, — that of a sordid and culpable avarice. According to this writer, — who listens at every keyhole, and accepts from every gossip, heaping together anecdotes of doubtful veracity and authentic information, official statements and witticisms current in Roman society, without concerning himself whether one portion of his story does not destroy some other, — Vespasian sold magistracies to applicants and pardon to those under prosecution; bought up certain commodities to sell again at retail; lastly, permitted the governors to pillage, reserving the right to make them discharge, like sponges filling themselves in the provinces but to be squeezed at Rome. Methods of procedure like these would have constituted a detestable government, itself organizing the squandering of its own resources. Vespasian, a soldier trained to discipline and order, certainly could not have followed them; and we find no trace of them in the facts which have come down to us. The appointments made by him are excellent, — in Britain, Cerialis, Frontinus, and Agricola, whom Tacitus regards as great men; in Asia, Silius Italicus, who, on the testimony of Pliny, gained to himself much fame there.³ We have seen that he brought forward Trajan, that he prepared the way for the Antonines, and that he honored the consulship by calling to it the celebrated jurisconsult Pegasus.

Suetonius further shows us Vespasian sharing with his freedmen

¹ Orelli, No. 3,262.

² *Intactis cultoribus* (Aur. Victor, *De Caes.* 9; Orelli, No. 4,031).

³ Tac., *Agric.* 17; Pliny, *Epist.* iii. 7.



THE COLOSSEUM.

the profits which they derived for certain favors. One day the servant who was in charge of his litter halted, on pretext that one of the mules had cast a shoe, and a party to a lawsuit was just in time to prefer a request. "How much have you gained by shoeing your mule?" he asked of the attendant, and exacted one half of the gratuity. One of his freedmen solicited a stewardship for a pretended brother; the Emperor sent for the candidate, made him count out the sum promised for procuring the situation, and gave him the place. The deputies of a town came to announce to Vespasian that a sum of money had been voted by their fellow-citizens to erect a statue to him. "Put it here," said he, extending his hand; "the base is all ready." Add to this also, if desired, the surname of Six Oboli, which the Alexandrians gave him, and the parody of the buffoon at his funeral: "How much will the procession cost?—Ten million sesterces. Give me a hundred thousand, and throw me into the Tiber."¹ All this is certainly lacking in dignity; but are they not rather the jokes of an old man who loved to laugh? or more probably slanders put in circulation by the gay society of Rome, by the elegant profligates of Nero's court, who could not be consoled as they saw this plebeian Emperor looking carefully after the state's money, which the heir of the Julii had been wont to fling to them in feasts and orgies? For them, to be prodigal was "to act the Caesar."² But let us leave these worthless trifles and come to serious history.

It is of course impossible to state with certainty the financial resources of the Empire, but in all probability they were by no means great. Under Domitian an increase of a third in the pay of the troops ruined the *aerarium militare*, although it was fed by the largest revenues of the state.³ The bad emperors guarded against a deficit by the law of treason; but Vespasian was not

¹ Aur. Victor (*De Caes.* 9) says: *Satis constat, aerarii inopia ac labe urbium novas eum, neque aliquandiu postea habitas vectigalium pensiones exquisivisse.* He afterwards enumerates the works executed by Vespasian, and adds: *Quae tot tantaque brevi confecta, prudentiam magis quam avaritiam probavere.* He is also reproached for having taken from certain colonies lands not yet conceded, *subseciva*, to sell them for the profit of the treasury. He would have done better, as Domitian did (*Suet., Dom.* 9), to leave the lands in dispute to the colonists, who would have ended by utilizing them; but this measure was still one of the least onerous to meet the financial exigencies of the moment.

² *Καταρπεύειν*; this is the saying of the Alexandrians against Vespasian: "He does not know how to act the Caesar" (*Dion, lxvi.* 8).

³ *Suet., Dom.* 12. On the *aerarium mil.*, see Vol. IV. pp. 101 and 159.

accustomed to "audit his accounts" after the fashion of Caligula and Nero.¹ However, for nearly ten years the government had done nothing for the Empire; and to the disasters caused by the carelessness of men in power were added those which arose from internal dissensions. All public functions were neglected; a multitude of creditors were presenting their claims to the treasury; many cities were begging assistance in rebuilding their temples and walls; and the reconstruction of the Capitol alone—that is to say, of the national sanctuary—must have cost an enormous sum. Still further, it was necessary to repair the bridges and highways; to erect the *castra stativa*, torn down at certain points by the Barbarians; to establish numerous colonies of veterans, in order to render the legions more docile and to lessen the army expenditure; to fill the arsenals emptied by the civil war; and to provide for the expenses required by the military reorganization of the frontiers. We have no knowledge of the wars of Vespasian, although three times in the year 71 he was saluted imperator, and three times again the following year. But when we see him making Cappadocia an imperial proconsular province, with numerous garrisons to check the incursions which desolated it, and, towards the Danube, extending his influence over the Barbarians even beyond the Borysthenes;² when we read in Tacitus that Velleda, the prophetess of the Bructeri, was at that time brought a captive to Rome; that Cerialis vanquished the Brigantes, and Frontinus the Silures,—we must believe that Vespasian made a vigorous effort along the whole line of his outposts to impress upon foreign nations respect for the Roman name, which two years of anarchy had greatly diminished. These expeditions, even when successful, were, however, a source of expense.

Here is the secret of that severe economy which appeared to the prodigal and light-minded a shameful parsimony. Vespasian once declared to the Conscript Fathers that four billion sesterces, or, according to another account, forty billion, were needed by him to restore everything to good condition.³ He boldly carried forward

¹ He did not like the law of treason, and never applied it in its rigor. Cf. Dion, lxvi. 9; Aur. Victor, *De Caes.* 9; Eutropius, vii. 13; Suidas, v. Βεσπασσιανός.

² Orelli, No. 750.

³ A hundred and ninety-two millions of dollars, if one reads *quadragies*; ten times that amount if we retain *quadringenties* (Suet., *Vesp.* 16). See, in the *Fragmenta Historicorum*

this work of reparation, re-establishing the taxes abolished under Galba, creating new ones, and augmenting those of the provinces. It was as much for this financial reorganization of the Empire as for its political and moral reorganization that he caused himself to be appointed censor. The register of the survey of lands which he caused to be drawn up, aided in discovering numerous estates and persons who had escaped taxation, or had not even been entered upon the lists. He had them included; and the tribute of several provinces was found to have doubled.¹ Nero had foolishly bestowed immunities: Vespasian withdrew them; and by forming new provinces, created new taxable material, to the further profit of the treasury. This is what he sought when he took away the franchises from eight states which had remained free, and for the most part had made very ill use of their liberty. We comprehend all these measures; they are those of a statesman who knows how to find resources to meet necessary expenses.

He even opened a new source of permanent expenditure. Rude as he was in his manners and in his language, the son of the publican of Reate understood the influence of letters and the arts, and he protected them "by granting rich recompenses and magnificent presents to celebrated poets,² to famous artists,—to him, for instance, who restored the Venus of Cos, and to the sculptor who repaired the Colossus. He even instituted an annual grant of a hundred thousand sesterces (\$3,840) to the Latin and Greek professors of rhetoric." Quintilian, who first received it, retained it for twenty years, and was in addition honored with the consular ornaments. It is said that this unwonted liberality³—a liberality which wins for the old soldier the praise of all the friends of letters at the present day—arose less from a lively appreciation of

Graec. iv. 578 (ed. Didot), two passages from John of Antioch and Suidas very favorable to Vespasian: . . . τὸν πλοῦτον οὐκ ἐς τὰς ἡδονάς, ἀλλ' ἐς τὰς δημοσίας χρείας ἐποεῖτο. Aur. Victor (*De Caes.* 9) is very favorable to him, and says, in reference to the accusation of avarice: *Uti quidam prave putant.* Eutropius (*Epit.* vii. 13) accepts it, but adds that he never took anything from any person, and that he loaded the indigent with gifts.

¹ Frontin., *De Colon. ap.* Goes. 126 and 146; Suet., *Vesp.* 16.

² Suetonius doubtless alludes to the gift of five hundred thousand sesterces which Vespasian, on the testimony of Tacitus (*De Orat.* 9), made to a famous poet of this time, Saleius Bassus, of whom we have no knowledge.

³ Augustus had already treated in a like manner Verrius Flaccus, son of a freedman, the most celebrated master of his time, and to whom he intrusted the education of his grandsons (Suet., *De Illust. Gramm.* 17).

literature than from a desire to control it, and that it was the first instance in history of the state's invading the purely intellectual domain. Doubtless Vespasian had no such purpose, and simply followed the current of opinion. The wants of a polished society were developing in the midst of a rich and tranquil Empire. The Romans, who could no longer act, and knew not how to think outside the circle of Greek ideas, occupied their protracted leisure in making, in prose and verse, continual variations on familiar themes. Everybody wrote or declaimed; and as there were *prudentes* to solve legal difficulties, it was necessary also to have masters to elucidate questions of grammar and rhetoric. Private persons established schools, libraries, and scholarships in favor of poor young men; the cities appointed public professors, or, as we say, founded chairs of instruction.¹ The state did as the cities did.

Besides, all that hitherto had been free activity and private industry came under regulation and took its place in the great machine constructed by the emperors. Already, under Nero, physicians had been assigned a place in the official and municipal organization; a salary, immunities, and a title being given to the physicians of the city or quarter, *archiatri populares*, and to the physicians of the palace, *archiatri palatini*, who all at last came to exercise a sort of authority over their fellow-practitioners. Vespasian did the same for men of letters. By giving them a position at court and in the state, he obeyed that spirit of classification which had been infused into the imperial government by Augustus. Thus the administration, like the devil-fish, which in the free ocean arrests and devours all that passes within its reach, was to seize and gradually absorb that which before had enjoyed a free existence. When it shall have succeeded in this work of absorption, it will have suppressed all movement, all life. The perfection of the system will be, for the Empire, rigidity, and then death.

It is, however, proper to remark that many literary men of the time determined henceforth to draw from this fount which

¹ Pliny, *Epist.* i. 8; iv. 13: . . . *Annuos sumptus in alimenta ingenuorum . . . multis in locis . . . praeceptores publice conducuntur.* They also enjoyed important privileges. All those *qui publice juvenibus prosunt* (*Digest*, xxvii. i. 6, sec. 5), philosophers, rhetoricians, grammarians, were exempt from trusteeships, from priestly offices, from municipal services, from the militia, and the obligation to act as judges in the tribunals or go on legations to the Emperor. Physicians, *περιοδευταί*, *id est*, *circulatores*, had the same privileges. See chap. lxxxiii. sec. 4.

was opened to them, and their eloquence took a more quiet tone. Others, however, still continued their declamations against "the tyrants."

In suppressing civil war and political activity, the Empire had thrown out of employment many persons who, after the proscriptions of the triumvirs, as in France after the Terror, had deemed themselves so happy in being alive that they had for many years asked nothing more, and gladly repeated the line of the poet,—

"Deus nobis haec otia fecit."

The peaceful and admired reign of Augustus is due to this universal lassitude quite as much as to the wisdom of the ruler; but in the long run, repose wearies, admiration palls, and ennui tires even of happiness. Since the reign of Tiberius there had been formed in Rome an opposition, scantily endowed with ideas and political sense, rich in that piquant wit which delights in scandal, in empty and high-sounding words, the delight of the idle in the halls and under the porticos. It was not a party with definite plans, ready to assume the reins of government, but consisted of isolated malecontents incapable of action, and yet quite capable, as the elder Seneca says, of risking their heads for a witticism. By their side were the Cynic and Stoic philosophers, two sects quite indifferent to politics, but furnishing to weak brains fine themes for declamation against society and the state. "These men," said Mucianus, "are filled with a foolish pride. Let your beard grow, raise your eyebrows, wrap yourself in a ragged cloak, and go without shoes—that is what constitutes a wise, courageous, and just man. The rest are worthy only of contempt. The nobles are fools, lesser men are small-minded, the handsome man is impure, the rich a robber, the poor a servant."¹ Juvenal, echoing the popular antipathy against these fiery moralists who pretend to speak their mind to the crowd as they do to the monarch, is harder yet about these "hypocrites."² Vespasian, by his censorship, had recruited their ranks, in expelling from the Senate and from the equestrian order persons of bad character, who afterwards concealed their spite beneath the philosopher's cloak. Such was that Palfurius Sura who, to please Nero, had contended in the

¹ *Excerpta Vat. apud Dion*, lxvi. 12.

² This is the title of his Second Satire.

arena against a young girl from Lacedaemon, and from whom Vespasian had taken his dishonored consular toga. This disgrace made of him a Stoic and an austere person,¹ who clamored for liberty and popular government up to the moment when, taken into favor again by Domitian, he became the most greedy of the informers; after which he labored, as jurisconsult, to establish the theory of the absolute rights of the Emperor. In the time of those emperors who willingly pronounced sentence of death, these men had said nothing, wrapped in their silence. A sad and resigned attitude had then been sufficient for their dignity; under the free and easy Vespasian they spoke, accused, and inveighed. At first the Emperor paid no attention to these clamors. Their virtue became indignant at this indifference; and as they were incurring the risk of being forgotten, they invited persecution, thinking that this would give them glory without martyrdom. Some even, intoxicated with pride and insolence at Vespasian's imperturbable coolness, proceeded to brave every peril in order to overpower this harmful tranquillity. At last an old law of the Republic, which expelled strangers from the city, was put in force against them.² One of them, being condemned to banishment because he publicly taught that the government of one man was the worst government, was informed of the sentence in the midst of a harangue which he was at that moment making against monarchy; he continued his speech. Another, likewise punished by exile, sees the Emperor coming. Instead of rising, or at least saluting the head of the Roman world, he insults him. Vespasian contents himself with saying, "You are doing your best to make me take away your life; but I do not kill a yelping cur." A third, Diogenes, constituting himself censor of the morals of the palace, openly inveighed against Titus in the theatre on account of his *liaison* with Queen Berenice, and was sentenced to be beaten with rods. Heras, his companion, at once recommenced, adding a mass of insults against the people, and suffered death.³

¹ Juvenal, *Schol. ad Sat.* iv. 53.

² *Lex Junia de Peregrinis*, of the year 126 B. C.

³ It is not known who this Heras was. Dion contents himself with saying (lxvi. 15): "Certain Cynic philosophers, having secretly entered (*παράδυντες*) Rome, went to the theatre and insulted the people." Perhaps this took place after the decree of banishment, which would explain the death of Heras.

These reformers, who go to the theatre to rail at the Emperor and the people, seem ridiculous, and, by the exaggerated character of their sentiments and their language, they are so. Yet these public attacks upon the morals and ideas of the time are a grave symptom. At the same period other men were also breaking with the Roman society and its beliefs. The philosophic and religious reaction against a sensual paganism aroused apostles, and even martyrs; and the world entered upon a wholly new path, to be filled with dramatic incidents and generous sacrifices, but also where social ties will relax, and the love for an earthly country grow feeble even to extinction.

Vespasian put an end to these agitations by renewing against the Stoics and the Cynics the *senatus-consulta* of the Republic, which had debarred philosophers from residing at Rome. He made an exception in the case of Musonius, the Roman knight previously proscribed by Nero, who seems to have followed the sect only in its good qualities. He would gladly have spared Helvidius also, the son-in-law of Thræsea and a man as honest as the latter, but inopportunately republican, and of the opinion that liberty consisted in insulting power. What Demetrius and Diogenes did in the street, Helvidius did in the senate-house and tribunal; he conspired openly, and in the heart of the government. During his prefecture he never mentioned Vespasian in his edicts; and when the latter returned to Rome, he saluted him by his family name, as if the Emperor was in his eyes merely a private citizen. In the Senate he argued vehemently against Vespasian; amid the groups gathered around him in the Forum, his words were always eulogistic of popular government, and he never failed to celebrate by a festival the birthdays of Brutus and Cassius. It would have been difficult not to regard this conduct as seditious;¹ and since Helvidius was a senator, impunity would have been one of those indications of weakness which are shown by governments when approaching dissolution. Vespasian, urged by Mucianus, suffered him to be banished, and, some time afterwards, on the renewal of complaints, sent an order to put him to death. This order the Emperor immediately wished to withdraw; but he was deceived by the assurance that it was then too late. Had Helvidius taken part

¹ Juvenal, *Sat.* v. 37. This is Dion's opinion, lxvi. 12.

in any of those numerous conspiracies spoken of by Suetonius?¹ We cannot answer, for history details only one of them, — that of Marcellus, a person of consular rank, and Caecina, formerly a general under Vitellius. This plot had already extended widely among the soldiers, and was on the eve of execution, when Titus, who had just seized a proclamation to the praetorians written by Caecina's own hand, invited the latter to a banquet, where he caused him to be assassinated, — a just execution, doubtless, but very summary, and by its form worthy of the worst days. Marcellus, condemned by the Senate, took his own life.²

No emperor since Tiberius had bestowed so much attention on the affairs of allied or subject nations as did Vespasian. He revived the system of colonies and put it in operation on a large scale, in order to increase the Roman element in the provinces. We may recognize in the name Flavianus, borne by many cities, the towns to which he and his sons, but he especially, sent out veterans; and we do not know all of them with certainty.³ We have seen him everywhere undertaking useful public works, and enrolling the prominent persons of the provinces in the Senate and in the equestrian order. During his sojourn in Egypt he had made strict reforms in that country, which had drawn upon him the ridicule of the turbulent Alexandrians. In Judaea he believed himself to have stifled a volcano, — which before it was completely extinguished, however, was destined to shake the entire East. The Jews who had escaped the slaughter had fled in two directions, — along the borders of the Tigris, whither they carried their impotent hatred, and into Africa, where a million of their co-religionists had long before preceded them. On finding themselves so numerous there, they sought to renew the war which had just closed with the destruction of Jerusalem. For a moment they succeeded in

¹ *Assiduas in se conjurationes* (Vesp. 25). Aur. Victor (*De Caes.*) says the same thing, — *conjurationum multas*. This does not contradict what has been said earlier (p. 142). The happy effects to be produced by the renewal of the aristocratic body could not make themselves felt at once, and the former nobles retained among the knights and in the Senate, or expelled from the two orders, preserved their character as malecontents and their inclination to conspiracy.

■ This Marcellus, a man of obscure birth, was a great rascal. Nero had given him five million sesterces as a recompense for having procured the condemnation of Thræsea.

³ Icosium, which was colonized by Vespasian, does not bear the added name of the Flavian city (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* v. 1). He seems also to have established veterans at Reate (Orelli, No. 3,685).

creating a disturbance at Alexandria, where they pulled down the statues of the Emperor; but betrayed by their brethren at Cyrene, at Thebes, and throughout all Egypt, they were put to death with tortures, and Vespasian shut up the temple which the high-priest Onias had built in the vicinity of Heliopolis.¹ A few Greeks who had been drawn into these disturbances were spared; a sedition



ANTIOCH, ON THE ORONTES (STATUE ALSO CALLED THE GENIUS OF ANTIOCH).²

which broke out later at Antioch was punished with no greater severity. Vespasian paid little heed to these paroxysms of municipal turbulence in the populace of the large Greek cities, provided the general good order was not compromised.

He was more severe towards a prince of that vicinity. Antiochus, king of Commagene, had fought for Otho at Bedriacum,

¹ Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* vii. 10, 37.

² Vatican, *Muséo Pio-Clem.* vol. iii. pl. 46.

and for Titus under the walls of Jerusalem; but suspected of being in communication with the Parthians, he was dispossessed, and Vespasian reduced his kingdom to the rank of a province. Tiberius had already once placed under the direction of the Empire this important point of the Oriental frontier. The destiny of this royal family marks the improvement in morals which we shall have occasion to notice later. Formerly captive kings were put to death and their children reduced to an abject condition; a son of this Antiochus received the ornaments of the prefecture, then rose to the consulship, and was admitted to the priesthood of the *Fratres Arvales*.¹ By joining Cappadocia to Galatia to form one imperial consular province,² re-uniting Pontus to the senatorial province of Bithynia, but placing it under the supervision of a prefect of the Pontic coast,³ and by the colonies of Sinope, Samosata, Neapolis, Emmaus, Vespasian fortified this line of Oriental frontiers, which in an extent of two hundred leagues everywhere bordered on the Barbarians. Accordingly, peace was not disturbed during all this reign; and when Vologeses, displeased because he had not been assisted against the Alani, wrote to the Emperor with disdain and reproach, a few preparations, or, as an ancient writer says, the mere apprehension of war, checked the Barbarians.

Vespasian everywhere drew closer the bonds of the Empire, which Nero had so greatly relaxed. He withdrew from the Lycians the liberty which the successor of Claudius had doubtless restored to them, and re-united them to Pamphylia. Greece also lost the independence which her fawning flatteries had won her, and Rhodes became the capital of the new province of the Isles. But he almost always respected the concessions of citizenship made by his predecessors, since they tended to the end which he himself dimly saw to be necessary,—the fusion of nations and the unity of the Empire. Thrace, that other barrier of the Roman world, had been, since the time of Claudius, territory belonging to the Empire, and was placed under the authority of the governor of Moesia. In order that this officer might not be diverted from the rigorous

¹ *C. I. L.* vol. iii. No. 552. It is by Trajan that he was *allectus inter praetorios*.

² Borghesi, *Œuvres*, v. 348.

³ Pliny, *Epist.* x. 18, 32. According to an inscription of the year 75 found in the suburbs of Tiflis, Vespasian aided the king of the Iberians to fortify his capital against the Parthians (*Journal Asiatique*, ix. 93).

supervision which it was needful for him to exercise along the Danube, Vespasian formed, at the expense of Bithynia and Asia, a new province, called the Hellespont, to which he attached Thrace; and by this change Byzantium lost her liberty.

This manipulation of the provinces would indicate another scheme, — that of dividing the governments, now of too much importance, which since the time of Augustus it had been usual to establish in the East for the purpose of concentrating the forces and making the defence stronger against the Parthians. Vespasian, who had proved in his own case how greatly these extensive commands favored the projects of the ambitious, made a separate government of Palestine, and further diminished the importance and forces of the proconsul of Syria by constituting Commagene and Cappadocia military provinces, as we have just seen. The same idea doubtless induced him to separate Thrace from Moesia.

We know nothing about the borders of the Rhine and of the Danube; and hence we must conclude that the firm discipline re-established by Vespasian maintained peace there. We only see that Moesia has so well cleared her valleys, but lately in a wild state, that she is in a position to send great quantities of grain to Rome.¹ This fact speaks much for the power of colonization which this Roman race possessed, so rapidly transforming provinces which seemed likely long to remain unsubmissive to their influence. Vespasian doubtless profited by one of the lessons which the civil war had taught when he established in front of the Julian Alps a colony at Flavium Solvense, upon the road which Antonius Primus had followed, so that another would have less facility in crossing this barrier of Italy. Helvetia had suffered much during the Vitellian war; he furnished aid to the country, for his name is found in several inscriptions, — unfortunately too defaced to furnish us any useful hints.² One of them says that a triumphal arch had been erected in honor of the Emperor's son Titus, near Vindonissa (Windisch), by the people of the country, *vicani*.³ In Gaul a rigorous search had been made for the abettors of the last insurrection;

¹ *Magno tritici modo annonam P. R. adlevavit* (Orelli, No. 750). Another inscription, of the time of Marcus Aurelius (*C. I. L.* vol. iii. No. 753), gives to the great town of Sirmium the surname of Colonia Flavia Sirmatum; one of the three Flavians had, therefore, established a colony there.

² Mommsen, *Inscr. Helv.* 18, 168, 249.

³ *Id.*, 245, in the year 79.

we have seen that one of the principal chiefs, Sabinus, discovered after the lapse of nine years, was conducted to Rome and executed, — an act of cruelty which is a stain on the life of Vespasian, unless he had some imperious reason for refusing this time his wonted clemency.

Galba had given the *jus Latii* to the greater part of Gaul; Vespasian extended it to the whole of Spain. As Italy was becoming enfeebled, it was prudence and justice to interest the more Roman provinces in the cause of the Empire. Not long ago a Gaul, Vindex, had overthrown Nero; and it was another Gaul, Antonius Primus, who opened Rome to Vespasian. Twenty years later began the Hispano-Gallic dynasty of those who are styled the Antonines.

The affairs of Britain are better known to us, thanks to Tacitus, whose *Agricola* furnishes useful information. Three skilful generals were in command there under Vespasian, — Cerialis, who reduced the Brigantes to submission; Julius Frontinus, the author of the book of Stratagems, who brought the Silurii into subjection; Agricola, whose administration belongs to the history of the following reigns. Vespasian, skilful in choosing men (which is an especially regal quality), also knew how to stimulate devotion by honoring merit. He one day delivered in the crowded Senate a brilliant eulogium upon that efficient governor of Moesia of whom we have already spoken, and he allowed his words to be engraved on a marble slab which we still possess, with the enumeration of all the services which Plautius had rendered to the state.¹

Vespasian was near the end of his laborious career. The Emperor was now sixty-nine years of age, and he was at his little house in the territory of Reate when death approached. "I feel that I am becoming a god," he said to those around him, laughing in advance at his apotheosis. He had no greater respect for omens, — at least at this moment. Being told of the appearance of a comet, as if it were an infallible augury, "That concerns the king of the Parthians, who is long-haired (*comatus*)," he said, "and not me, who am bald,"² — the words of a superstitious man who ended by becoming a sceptic. Up to his last moment manly thoughts occupied his mind. He received deputations, gave orders, provided

¹ Orelli, No. 750.

² Dion, lxvi, 17.

for all his affairs; and, feeling the approach of dissolution, "An emperor," he said, "ought to die standing." He attempted to rise, and expired in the effort on the 23d of June, 79.

The first plebeian Emperor has had no historian; but a few words of his biographer suffice for his renown: *Rem publicam stabilivit et ornavit*, "by him the state was strengthened and adorned." Pliny says also: "Greatness and majesty produced in him no other effect than to render his power of doing good equal to his desire." We may add that this Emperor, himself a soldier and the choice of the legions, was wiser than Trajan, although the latter has been more highly extolled; for Vespasian sought everything from peace, nothing from war.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

TITUS AND DOMITIAN (79-96 A.D.).

I. — TITUS (79-81).

VESPASIAN being dead, Titus¹ assumed the title of Augustus. Brought up at the court of Claudius, he was one of the companions of Britannicus, and was present, near his young friend, at the fatal banquet, perhaps even tasted the poison.² He served with distinction as tribune in Germany and in Britain, and we have seen that he terminated the war in Judaea. The soldiers considered him one of the bravest of men, the officers esteemed him the most skilful, and his many good qualities made him a host of friends. Yet the fondness which he showed for banquets and spectacles, his severity in the administration of the prefecture of the praetorium, and the murder of Caecina, awakened anxiety. But he had profited by the lessons of his father. The government of eighty millions of men appeared to him a matter serious enough to require that he should attend only to public affairs. His father had prepared him for this by taking him as associate in the Empire;³ he had given to him the title of Caesar, the censorship, the tribunitian power, the prefecture of the praetorium, and seven consulships. Coming into power at the age of maturity, rich in experience and satiated with pleasures by his very excesses, he had henceforth but one passion, — that of the public

¹ Titus Flavius Vespasianus, born at Rome on the 30th of December, 41, the year of the birth of Agricola (Suet., *Tit.* 2). He was accordingly thirty-eight and a half years old when he came to the throne.

² See Vol. IV. p. 582. "It was so thought," says Suetonius; and he was long and dangerously ill (*Tit.* 2).

³ *Participem atque etiam tutorem imperii agere* (Suet., *Tit.* 6). He bore, even in the lifetime of Vespasian, the title of imperator (Orelli, No. 751), not as a *praenomen*, as did the reigning prince, but because he had triumphed with his father.

welfare. At the outset he dismissed his boon companions; in his father's lifetime he had already sacrificed to Roman prejudices his affection for the Jewish Queen Berenice, whom he had sent back

TITUS.¹

to the East.² In taking possession of the supreme authority he declared that he would keep his hands pure from blood; and he

¹ Bust of the Uffizi Gallery.

² She was the daughter of Agrippa, the last king of the Jews, sister of young Agrippa, the king of Ituraea, and widow of her uncle Herod, king of Chalcis, and of Polemon, king of Cilicia. She was thirteen years older than Titus, and consequently fifty-two years old at the death of

fulfilled his word: no one under his reign perished by his orders. Two young patricians were condemned to death for conspiring against his person. He pardoned them, made them sit by his side

at the games of the circus; and when, according to custom, the swords of the gladiators were presented to him that he might feel their edges, he handed the weapons in turn to the late conspirators,—a mark of confidence attended with slight danger, perhaps, but one which was greatly applauded. Vespasian, menaced by continual plots, had treated with consideration certain remains of the ancient tyranny, the informers and suborners of witnesses, without employing their services; Titus had them beaten with rods, sold, or transported. He destroyed the system itself when he refused to receive accusations of high treason, when he forbade entering complaint of an act under several laws, and when he accorded the right of prescription to the



JULIA, DAUGHTER OF TITUS, AS CLEMENCY.¹

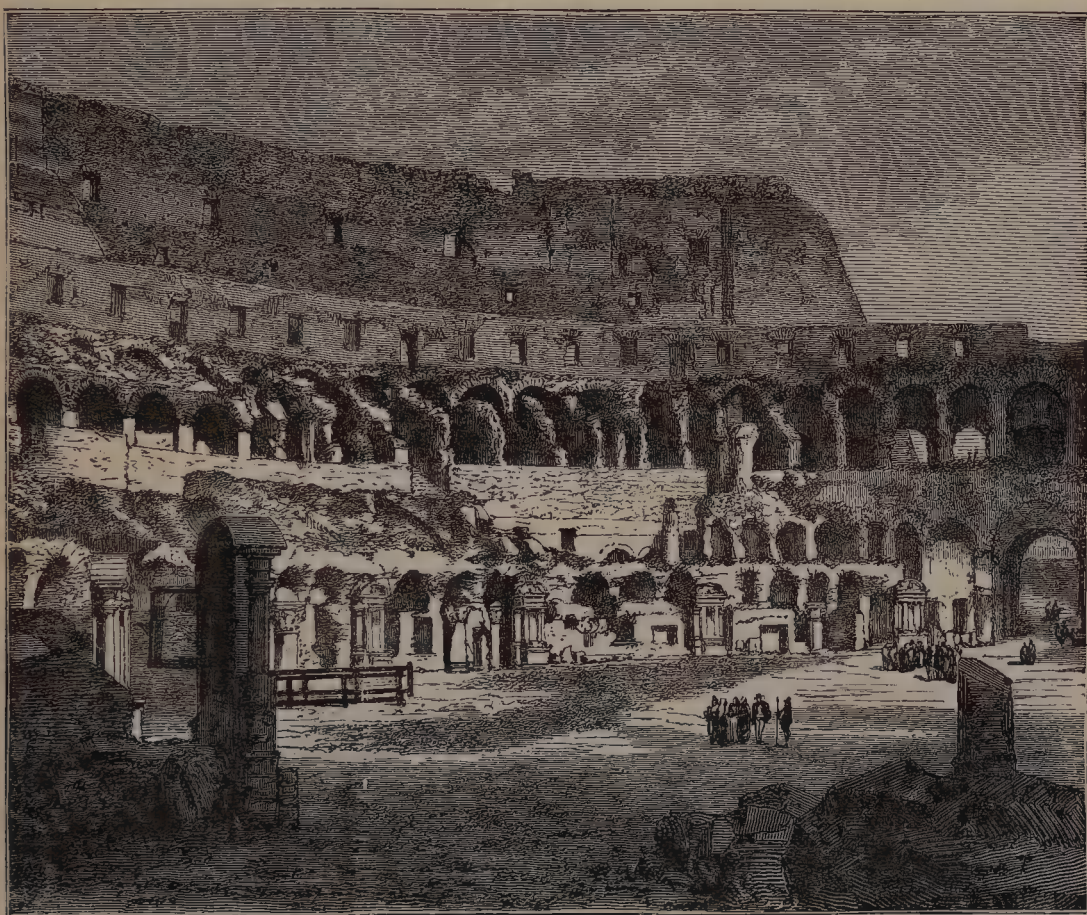
dead by prohibiting attacks upon their memory after the expiration of a certain limit, which he fixed.

It was to be feared that this kindness might degenerate into weakness. For example, Tiberius had wisely enacted that favors conferred by one emperor, unless individually confirmed by his

Vespasian; but it is probable that she left Rome five years earlier. She returned there at the accession of Titus, but without changing the resolution of the Emperor. Cf. Josephus, *Ant. Jud.* xviii. 7; xx. 5, etc.; Suet., *Tit.* 7; Dion, lxvi. 15, 18.

¹ Statue of the Vatican, Braccio Nuovo, No. 56.

successor, should become void. Titus recognized by a single act the validity of all prior concessions.¹ This was more monarchical, since the imperial will seemed thus one and immutable, notwithstanding the fact that one emperor followed another; but it was depriving himself of a useful means of control, and giving the rein to an avidity which no fear of the future now held in check. Accordingly, applicants crowded forward; no one was repulsed; and when his



PORTION OF THE ARENA OF THE COLOSSEUM.

counsellors became alarmed at these gifts, which were impoverishing the treasury, and at so many promises which he could not fulfil,—“No one,” he said, “ought to go away disappointed from the presence of his sovereign.” To the people, who, for their part, solicited neither promotion nor office, he gave, at the opening of the Colosseum, magnificent games which lasted a hundred days,—

¹ *Quum ex instituto Tiberii omnes dehinc Caesares beneficia a superioribus concessa principibus aliter rata non haberent, quam si eadem iisdem et ipsi dedissent, primus praeterita omnia uno confirmavit edicto* (Suet., Tit. 8). Our kings in the Middle Ages made the principle of Tiberius a rule of law for the royal domain.

a naval fight, gladiators, and five thousand wild beasts. From a stage erected in the theatre he scattered among the crowd wooden



A CORRIDOR OF THE COLOSSEUM.

balls, each containing an order for provisions or clothing, for vases of gold or silver, for slaves and equipages. He built new warm baths, to which he admitted the public while he was himself

bathing; and in order that they might once more enjoy, at least in the festivities, their lost sovereignty, he showed them great deference, joked with the spectators in the theatre, declaring that all should proceed according to the wishes of the assembly, and not his own; that the spectators had only to ask for what they desired, to obtain it immediately. A greatly overrated saying illustrates this good-natured, easy temper. "Oh, my friends!" he lamented one night at supper, when he had not made any gift since morning, "Oh, my friends, I have lost a day!"



REMAINS OF THE BATHS OF TITUS.

The duties of an emperor are more austere, and popularity thus won at the expense of the state's resources is not the best; but that which Titus gained was of course immense after the severe administration of Vespasian. Let us hasten to say that communities suffering under any calamity found him as prompt to alleviate their miseries as he was to satisfy the desires of his courtiers. An eruption of Vesuvius overwhelmed Herculaneum, Pompeii, and Stabiae; a pestilence carried off thousands of people in Rome itself; and at last a conflagration, which raged three days, consumed once more the Capitol, the Library of Augustus, and Pompey's Theatre. To Campania Titus sent men of consular

rank with large sums of money, and he devoted to the relief of the survivors the property that had fallen to the treasury through the death of those who had perished in the disaster without leaving heirs. At Rome he took upon himself the work of repairing everything; and to provide the requisite funds, he sold the furniture of the imperial palace. This lavish expenditure, which was in some instances necessary, was likely to reduce Domitian to financial straits; and we shall see how Domitian escaped from that embarrassment.

This reign lasted only twenty-six months, from the 23d of June, 79, to the 13th of September, 81. As Titus was about to



APOTHEOSIS OF TITUS.²

visit his paternal estate in the Sabine territory, he was seized by a violent fever which soon left no hope of his recovery. The story runs that, opening the curtains of his litter, he gazed at the sky with eyes full of tears and reproaches. "Why," he exclaimed, "must I die so soon? In all my life I have, however, but one thing to repent." What was this? No one knows. Let us not investigate;¹ nor, on the other hand, assert that the shortness of this reign did not leave time for his

love of the public good to expire, for popular praise to grow faint, and for obstacles to rise in his path which would perhaps have turned him aside.³ Good name among emperors is too rare for us to refuse Titus the appellation bestowed on him by his contemporaries, — the "Delight of the human race."

Some writers have alluded to a report that he was poisoned by Domitian; but Suetonius, who is so prone to accept sinister rumors, does not believe this, and the physicians of Titus told Plutarch that this Emperor was killed by the injudicious use of warm

¹ Was it the murder of Caecina without form of trial?

² From a bas-relief on the triumphal arch of this Emperor.

³ This is the opinion of Dion, Zonaras, Ausonius, etc. *Felix brevitate regni.* Julian (*Les Césars*, 7) reproaches him with lax morals.



TITUS (STATUE IN THE VATICAN, BRACCIO NUOVO, NO. 26, FOUND NEAR
THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN LATERAN, 1828).

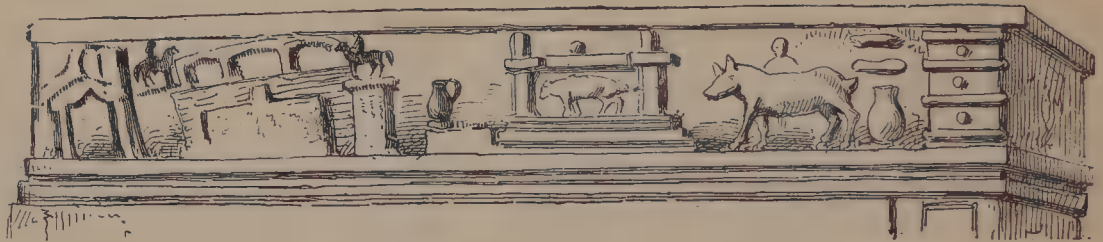
baths. The Jews had much fuller information about this premature death, and the Talmud relates the following story. Titus was returning to Italy with the sacred vessels taken from the temple of Jehovah, when he was assailed by a furious tempest. "The god of the Jews," he exclaimed, "who drowned Pharaoh, has power on the waters; but I am more than his match on land." At these words a voice replied: "Wretch! thou child of a wretch! I have created an infinitely little creature, which shall fight for me." As soon as Titus touched the shore of Italy, a gnat crept into his nostrils and lodged in his brain, where it gnawed for seven years. One day, as the Emperor was passing a blacksmith's forge, the noise of the hammer on the anvil stopped the insect, and the excruciating torture ceased. Titus thereupon gave four pieces of silver daily to a man who kept close to him and struck incessantly on an anvil. For a month the plan succeeded; but at the expiration of this time the insect became accustomed to the noise, and resumed its ravages. When Titus was dead his head was opened, and a gnat was found as large as a swallow, armed with claws of iron and a brazen beak. With this narrative, related to their children, the Jews, in their implacable hate, pursued the memory of the destroyer of Jerusalem.

An occasion for connecting the history of the earth with that of mankind is rarely afforded, because changes in the outline of the globe, although great with reference to an entire geological epoch, take place almost imperceptibly. For the time of Titus, however, the record of a sudden and terrible shock has been preserved,—the eruption of Vesuvius, after a repose of perhaps two thousand years, and the destruction of several Campanian cities.

The ancients had been aware of the volcanic nature of this mountain; but the earliest traditions give no account of any eruption. In the first century of our era there remained but half of the original crater, which can still be recognized, the Somma. The other half, fronting the sea, had fallen in; and the place of the present crater was occupied by a broad plateau, whose sides were clothed with vines, while its summit was covered with thickets, the haunt of the wild boar. To form an idea of the region as it then was, we must omit the cone of black cinders, over thirteen hundred feet high, which rises above the old plateau, and from

which the traveller has an incomparable view of Naples, its bay, its islands, and the cities crowded along those enchanted shores, while beneath his feet the mouth of the volcano is filled with threatening noises, smoke, and with sulphurous vapors, which leave here and there on the stones that have fallen on its rim brilliant tints of red, yellow, orange, and violet, placing, as it were, upon the brow of the sombre mountain the fragments of a shattered diadem.

An earthquake, which on the 5th of February, 63, shook Campania and overthrew almost the entire city of Pompeii,¹ proclaimed that the subterranean fires were resuming their activity. Calm, however, returned, and lasted sixteen years,² until the middle of the summer of 79 A. D. Then the ground began to heave again; wells and springs dried up, the sea grew very rough, and dull



BAS-RELIEF REPRESENTING THE EARTHQUAKE OF 63 AT POMPEII.³

rumblings were heard. Finally, on the 23d of August, an immense cloud, resembling a gigantic pine, whose top rose nearly ten thousand feet high, appeared above Vesuvius, dark, and spreading night around it, but constantly rent by lightning. Pliny the naturalist, who was in command of the fleet at Misenum, amazed at this strange phenomenon, wished, with scientific curiosity, to study it near at hand. He had the galleys fitted out to take on

¹ Sen., *Quest. nat.* vi. 1. Herculaneum was likewise partially destroyed. Nuceria, and even Naples, suffered from the shock.

² According to an inscription of the year 76, Herculaneum was again disturbed by an earthquake in that year, unless Vespasian restored in 76 the ruins made in 63, which is scarcely probable.

³ Frieze of a family altar discovered at Pompeii in 1875 in the house of the banker L. C. Jucundus, upon which is represented in relief the earthquake of 63. Here are the columns of the temple of Jupiter in a leaning position, and at the sides equestrian statues on the point of falling; at the right a bull is being led, as an expiatory victim, to the altar of the Pompeian Venus. Troubled about the future, the banker had sought to spare his house the return of a like calamity by sacrifices to the tutelary deity of the city (E. Pressuhn, *Pompéi, les dernières fouilles de 1874 à 1878*).

board the marines stationed at Resina, and the dwellers on the coast, who were wild with terror. But a shoal had suddenly been formed, and he could not reach the shore, where the waves were breaking with fury, while cinders and stones rained down upon the vessels. The situation was dangerous, and scientific investigation impossible; he therefore moved a little farther on and landed at Stabiae. From this point he beheld Vesuvius wrapped in flames; the lava rushing from the new crater which it had just opened, and flowing down through lateral fissures; the combustible gases, which burst into a blaze as they came in contact with the air; and, last of all, the cloud that continually hung over the mountain and, in the midst of the darkness which shrouded the whole country, reflected the tremendous conflagration. Pliny observed all these phenomena tranquilly, took notes, and dictated. Towards evening he retired to rest and slept soundly. But the court of the house became filled with cinders, and the house itself threatened to fall. His attendants roused him, and he hurried out, covering his head with a pillow to shield it from the showers of falling stones. The party assembled on the shore; but the sea was extremely rough, and no one could embark. Pliny, who was very stout, and utterly exhausted by his rapid walk, lay down at full length on the ground. At this moment flames seemed to draw near, preceded by a sulphurous smell. He arose once with the assistance of two slaves, but too late, and fell back again, — doubtless suffocated by the carbonic acid, which in volcanic eruptions is freely disengaged, and, being heavier than air, remains on the surface of the ground, where in lying down the philosopher had inhaled it.¹

While Pliny was dying at Stabiae, Pompeii, a small mercantile city of twelve thousand inhabitants, built near the mouth of the Sarno upon an old overflow of lava, was buried under sixteen feet of pumice-stone and cinders; and Herculaneum, under sixty or eighty feet of liquid mud² which, solidified by time, to-day supports

¹ All this — except, of course, our inference — is taken from a letter of the younger Pliny, the adopted son of his uncle. A second letter, describing his mother's flight and his own, completes his interesting narrative.

² M. Fouqué has calculated that in 1865 Aetna sent forth so much watery vapor that this vapor, after cooling in the upper regions of the atmosphere and descending in the form of rain upon the mountain, covered it with about twenty-eight thousand cubic yards of water. A similar fact occurs in all eruptions. In 79 this torrent fell upon Herculaneum, carrying with

the two cities of Portici and Resina. Upon a *tessera*, or theatre-token, found at Pompeii are marked the place where its possessor was to sit, and the title of a comedy of Plautus, *Casina*, which was perhaps given the evening before the city perished.

Two fifths of Pompeii are now cleared, and the visitor has the strange spectacle of a Roman city coming to light after eighteen



STREET IN POMPEII.

centuries, — an insignificant city certainly, with small houses, narrow streets, public buildings devoid of grandeur, art without splendor, though not without grace¹; and yet all this produces a profound impression.² The Roman people have left such memories

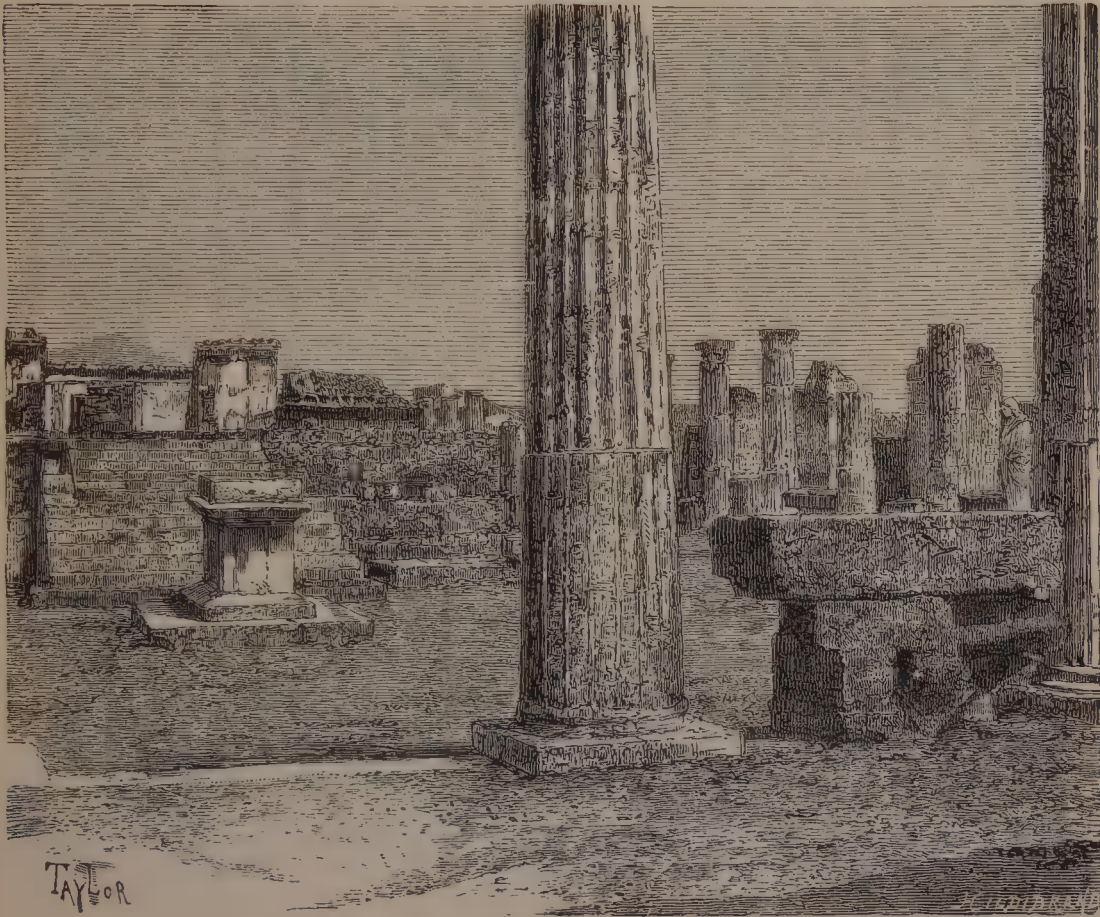
it enormous masses of cinders, which filled up the streets, covered the houses, and rose from thirty to forty feet above the highest buildings.

¹ We give a chromo-lithographic impression of the fresco of Orpheus, discovered in 1874 at Pompeii, not on account of its value as a work of art, but because the early Christians adopted the myth of Orpheus to represent Christ subduing fiery passions, and because they reproduced it on their tombs.

² Most of the inhabitants of Pompeii succeeded in escaping with their valuables, or returned to seek them by entering through the upper stories (houses with three stories

that merely to stand in one of their obscure municipia, from which the inhabitants seem to have gone forth but yesterday, fills the mind with almost religious awe.

“If we wish,” says M. Boissier, “to appreciate the fine houses of Pompeii as we ought, and to account for the attractions which



REMAINS OF THE TEMPLE OF VENUS AT POMPEII.

they must have had for their owners, we must dismiss certain prejudices. The inhabitants of this charming city seem engrossed

were rare). Still, a certain number perished. Some five or six hundred skeletons have already been found, although half of the city has not yet been searched. Cf. *Descrizione di Pompei*, by M. Fiorelli, who is so skilfully superintending the excavations. Not a single manuscript has been discovered at Pompeii except, in 1875, the account-books of the banker Jucundus; but a bookseller's shop was found, though empty. Herculaneum, on the contrary, has furnished seventeen hundred and fifty-six manuscripts, of which about five hundred have been unrolled and read. Unfortunately they possess little interest. [They belong to the library of an Epicurean philosopher, and will certainly give us much important information, as they have already done, on that system. But who can tell that the philosopher did not possess a copy of Sappho or Menander among his serious books? The unrolled portions are printed in the *Volumina Heracleensia*, in course of publication for many years at Naples.—ED.] With regard to Pompeii, see the curious volume published by the Royal Government for the eighteenth centenary of the eruption, and Boissier, *Promenades archéologiques*, pp. 287-378.

in seeking first of all, their comfort, but they did not find it where we do. Every age, in this respect, has its own opinions and preferences, and there is a fashion in being happy as in everything else. If we allow ourselves to be too much swayed by this tyranny of custom, which makes us think it impossible to live otherwise than as we live, the houses of Pompeii will seem to us small and inconvenient. But if we forget a moment our ideas and usages, if we try to become Romans in thought, we shall find

DOMVS POMPEIANA



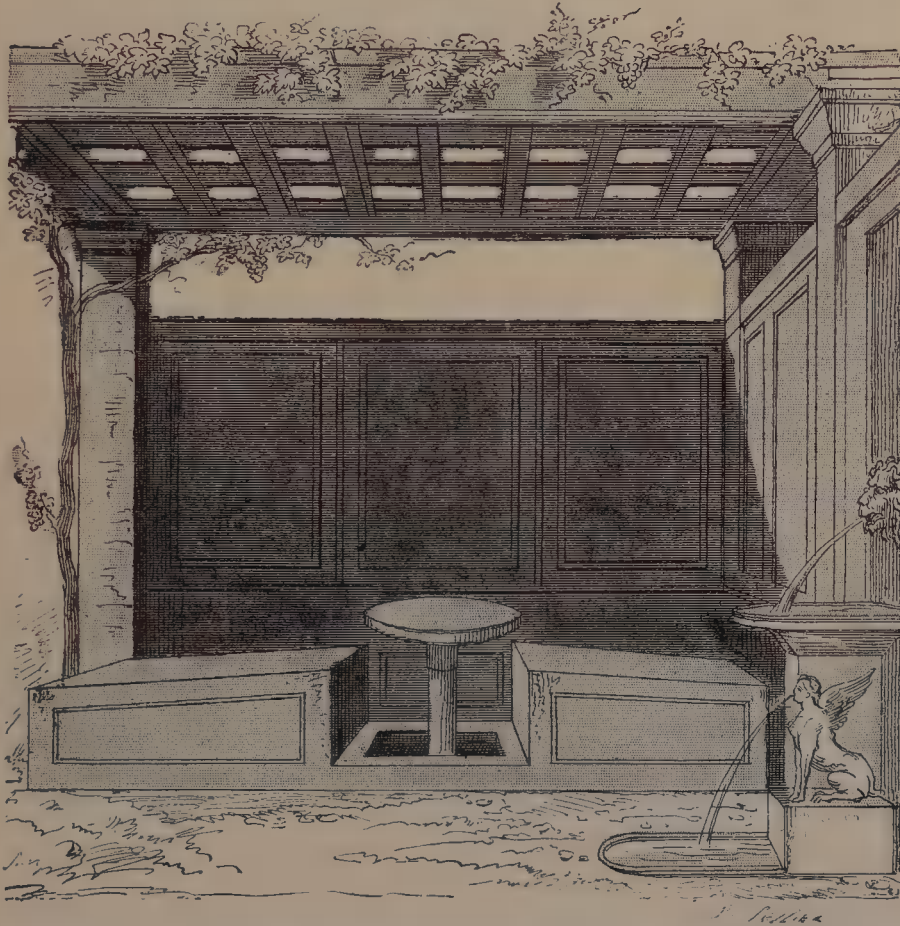
PLAN OF POMPEIAN HOUSE.²

that they were admirably constructed for their inmates' use, and perfectly suited to all the tastes and needs of the time. It is a difficult matter to-day in European cities, even for the rich, to possess a separate mansion for themselves. They live, for the most part, in houses which they share with many other persons. Their apartments are made up of a series of capacious, well-ventilated rooms, with large windows looking into streets and squares. There is nothing similar to this in Pompeii, where the number of houses occupied by a single family is very considerable. The principal rooms are all on the ground floor.¹ The richest inhabitants built themselves houses situated on four streets, thus occupying the whole block. If they were economical, they cut off from this large plot of ground some strips, which they let for a good sum; and we sometimes find shops occupying the whole

¹ The upper stories must have been reserved for the least important rooms. They are reached by steep and narrow flights of steps. There is nothing resembling the grand staircase of modern houses, which leads to all the stories at once, and is common to all the apartments. In Nissen's writings (*Pompeian Stud.*, p. 602) will be found some very ingenious remarks about the part which this staircase plays in our dwellings and the character it has given them. Of all parts of the modern house it is what a Pompeian would least have understood.

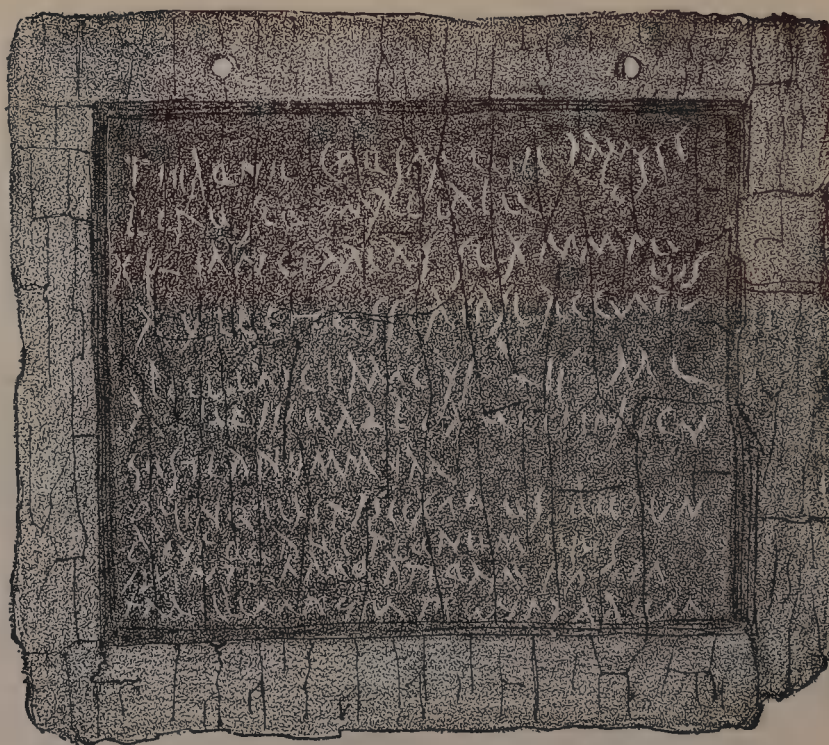
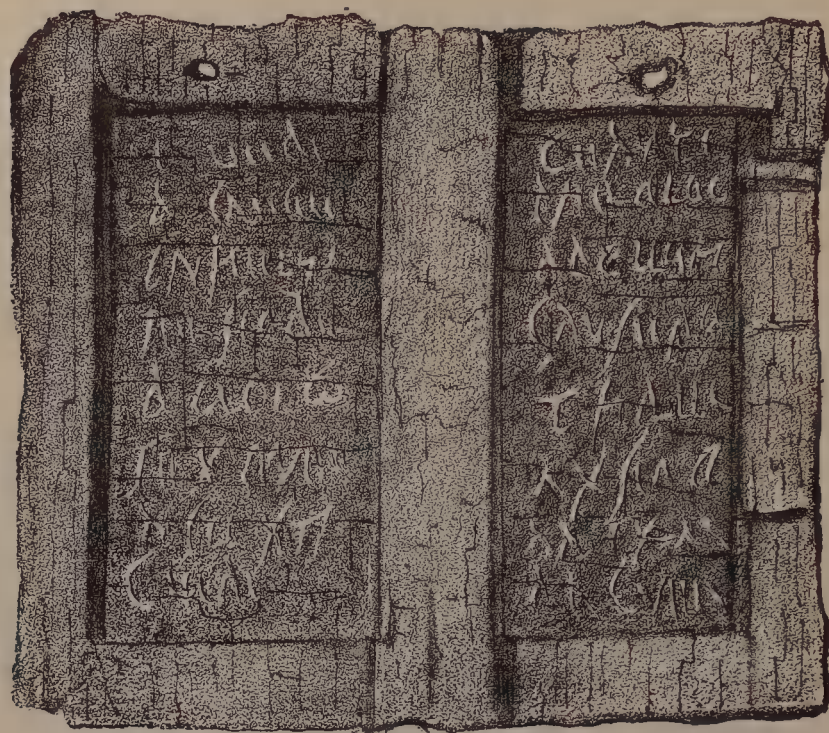
² According to Steecher, *Les plus belles murailles de Pompéi*, cahier iii. pl. 1. *Ostium*: entrance-hall, often paved with mosaic. The four rooms on the front appear to have been shops, entirely disconnected with the house. *Atrium*: inner court or hall, sitting-room of the family, and often, in houses of the lower classes, the kitchen. In the centre is the *impluvium*, a tank of water. *Ala*: wings, small rooms or recesses at the right and left of the atrium. *Triclinium*: dining-room, having three couches, on which the guests reclined, and a central table. *Tablinum*: a recess or room, opposite the entrance into the atrium, where family records and archives were kept. *Peristylum*: a court open to the sky, and surrounded by columns. In the centre is the *viridarium*, or garden. The *exedra* and *oecus* were rooms for social purposes.

exterior of the house. While with us the front is reserved for the best rooms, in Pompeii it was given up to business purposes, or else closed with thick walls, in which there were no openings. The whole house, instead of looking towards the street, faces the interior. It only communicates with the outer world by the entrance door, kept strictly closed and guarded; there are few windows, and these only in the upper stories. Families wished to live in private, far from the indifferent and from strangers.



ARBOR OR PAVILION OF THE HOUSE CALLED ACTAEON'S, AT POMPEII.

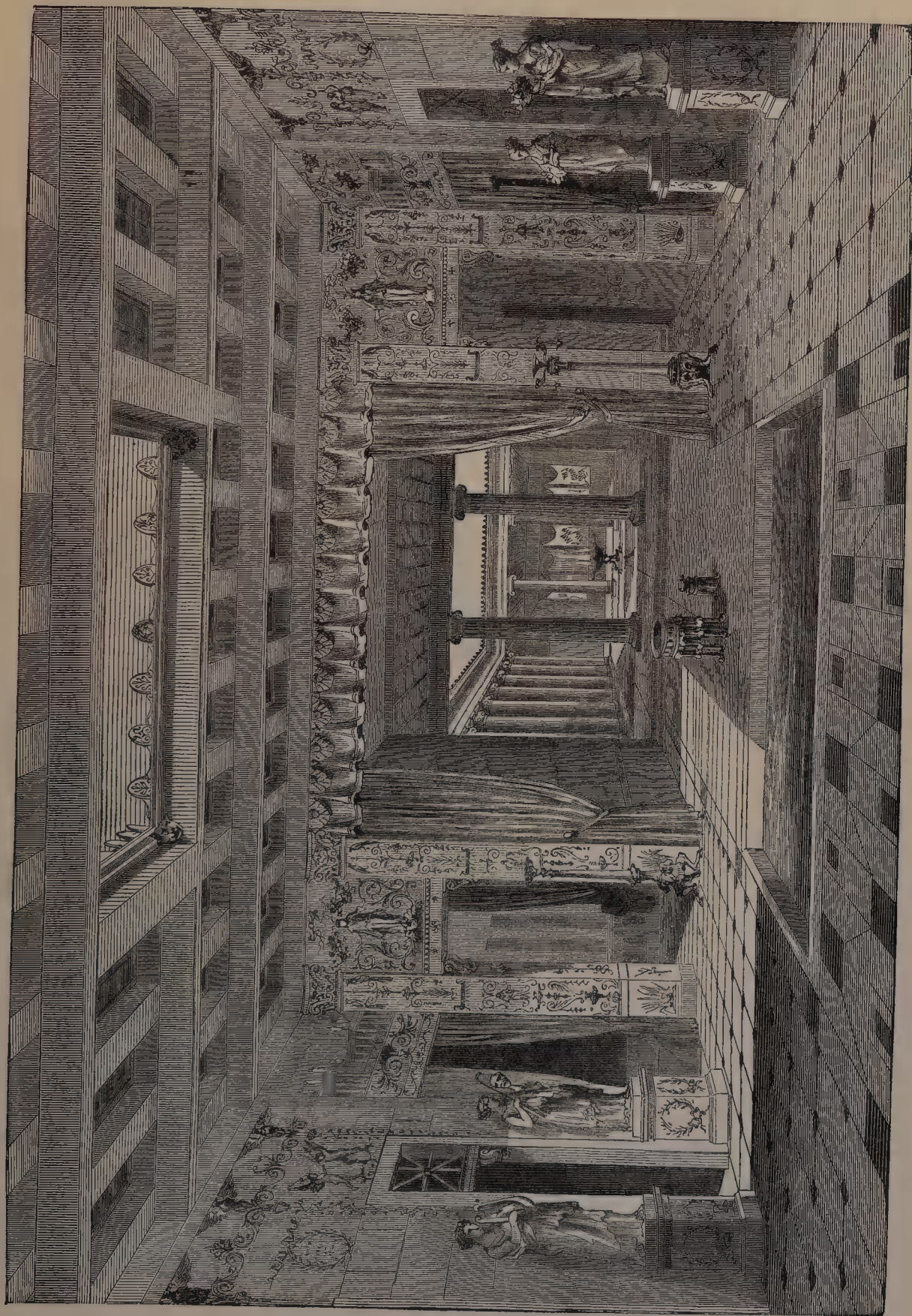
Our so-called 'home life' at the present day belongs largely to the public. People enter our houses with ease; and when they do not come, we like at least to see them through our spacious windows. With the ancients, private life was more really secluded than with us. The head of the house did not desire to look into the streets, and he was specially averse to having persons in the street look into his house. Even within the mansion he had divisions and distinctions. The part into which he welcomed his



TABLETS CONTAINING RECEIPTS, FOUND AT POMPEII IN 1875.¹

visitors was not that to which he retired with his family; and it was not easy to penetrate into this sanctuary, separated from

¹ On the 3d of July, 1875, there were discovered in the house of L. C. Jucundus several hundred little wooden tablets which had been deposited in a wooden chest that was partly recovered, and which are entirely carbonized. They were originally tied in twos or threes by



THE INTERIOR (ATRIUM AND PERISTYLIUM) OF PANSÀ'S HOUSE AT POMPEII, RESTORED.

every other part by corridors, closed by doors or hangings, and guarded by porters. The owner received when he wished, he remained in seclusion when so inclined; and in case any client, more troublesome and obstinate than usual, lingered in the vestibule to meet him on his way out, he had a back door (*posticum*) on a narrow street, which permitted him to escape.

“To those who find the rooms of the Pompeian houses rather too narrow to suit them, the answer has already been made, that the inmates spent a large part of their day away from home, under the porticos of the Forum or in the theatres. We must add that if the rooms are not large, they are numerous. The Roman used his residence as he did his slaves; he had different rooms for each event of the day, as he had servants for every necessity of life. Each room in his house is made precisely for the use to which it is destined. He is not satisfied, as we are, with a single dining-room; he has them of different sizes, and he uses one or another at different seasons of the year, or according to the number of friends whom he desires to entertain. The chamber where he takes his siesta during the day, and that to which he retires for sleep at night, are very small, admitting light and air only through the door, — which is not a disadvantage in the South, where coolness is promoted by darkness. Besides, he is there only while he is asleep; for the rest of the time he has his *atrium* and his *peristylum*.¹

“Here he prefers to stay when he is at home. He is there not only with his wife and children, but under the eyes of his servants, and sometimes in their society. In spite of his fancy for seclusion and isolation, of which I have spoken, he does not shun their company, for the family of antiquity is more extensive than ours. It embraces, while recognizing their inferiority, the slave and the freedman, so that the master, in living with them, feels himself among his own people. These open and closed *atria*, where

means of strings passing through two holes. The two exterior faces are joined; the interior surfaces, slightly hollowed, and protected from rubbing by a border, were covered with wax, on which letters were cut with a sharp instrument. Most of these tablets refer to auctions which Jucundus held as broker, and contain receipts made to the banker (Pressuhn, *op. cit.*, *Maison de L. Juc.*, pl. viii., Nos. 4 and 5).

¹ See plan of Pompeian house, p. 172, and note 2, and Interior of Pansa's House at Pompeii, facing p. 174.

the family spends its time, are found in all Pompeian houses without exception; they are indispensable to furnish light for the rest of the dwelling. Consequently all persons, even the poorer classes, took pleasure in ornamenting them tastefully, and sometimes with profusion. If the extent of ground permitted it, various shrubs were planted, a few flowers were made to grow. Literary¹ and fashionable people sneered at these miniature gardens between four walls; but it was very easy for them to talk thus while they possessed magnificent villas with great trees and with vine-arbors hanging from elegant columns. Every one does as well as he can, and I confess that I could not be harsh to these poor people who were so determined to place a little verdure before their eyes. I criticise them more on account of their love for those little streamlets which they pompously styled *euripes*, for the grottos of rock or shell, which are simply pretentious baubles. Their excuse is the fact that this uncouth taste has been shared by the middle classes of all countries and in all ages. That class in Pompeii, at least, far surpassed others in the precautions which they took to keep their eyes from any unpleasant object. They had beautiful mosaics, brilliant stuccos, incrustations of marble on which their eyes loved to rest. The dazzling brightness of the white stones was everywhere softened by agreeable tints; the walls were painted in gray or black, the columns tinted with yellow or red; and along the cornices ran graceful arabesques, composed of interlacing flowers, where at intervals were represented birds that never existed, and landscapes that have nowhere been seen. These whims of the imagination that signify nothing, pleased the eye and did not try the mind. From time to time, on a larger panel, some mythological scene, painted without pretension and with bold strokes, recalled to the owner a masterpiece of antique art, and permitted him to enjoy it through this souvenir. Sometimes the petty householder was fortunate enough to possess a bronze imitation of one of the most beautiful works of the Greek sculptors, — a dancing satyr, an athlete in combat, a god, a goddess, a performer on the cithara, or the like.² He knew its value, comprehended its

¹ See what Fabianus says on this subject (Sen., *Controv.* vol. ii., pref.).

² From Pompeii and Herculaneum, that is to say, from two second-class cities, come the beautiful bronzes in the Museum of Naples which are the admiration of foreigners.

beauty, and placed it on a pedestal in the *atrium* or *peristylum*, that he might gaze fondly at it whenever he came in or went out. They were happy people, those rich Pompeians! They knew how to adorn their life with all the charms of comfort, to elevate it by the enjoyment of the arts; and I believe that many important persons in our largest cities would be tempted to envy the lot of the obscure citizens of this little town."

II.—DOMITIAN (81-96); WISE ADMINISTRATION OF HIS FIRST YEARS.

THE youth of Domitian¹ had been worthy of the times of Nero, and he had wearied his father and brother by his intrigues. Nevertheless he was temperate, to the extent of taking but one meal a day,² and he had a taste for military exercises,³ for study and poetry, especially since the elevation of his family. Vespasian had granted him honors, but no power; and at the death of Titus he had only the titles of Caesar and Prince of the Youth. In his hurry to seize at last that long-coveted Empire, he abandoned his dying brother and hastened to Rome, to the camp of the *prætorians*. A *donativum* and the eagerness of the Romans to accept hereditary right whenever it appeared, secured to him the position which no one, moreover, was prepared to dispute.

On the day of their coronation there are few bad monarchs: almost all begin well; but in despotisms the majority end badly, particularly when the reigns are of long duration. Nero, if *Britannicus* is forgotten, was for five years a good emperor; but absolute

Among the middle classes of our provincial towns nothing similar would be found. We must add that the finest treasures in Pompeii were not left there. We know that the inhabitants made excavations after the catastrophe, and that they returned to take away their most precious possessions. We have then to-day only what could not be found at that time or what they neglected to take (Boissier, *Promenades archéol.* pp. 314-318).

¹ Titus Flavius Domitianus, born at Rome October 23d, A. D. 51.

² Before and after this single repast he took only a little fruit and a glass of wine. Yet he gave magnificent banquets, but did not tolerate any excess at them, and obliged his guests to leave the table before sunset.

³ He was so skilful in drawing the bow that he made his arrows pass between the open fingers of a slave, or drove two of them, from great distances, into the head of an animal running, so as to represent two horns (?). Pliny (*Hist. Nat. in prooem.*) and Quintilian (x. 1, 91) speak highly of his verses. Suetonius says that as soon as he became emperor he ceased to compose any.

power is a downward slope with a precipice at the end. The passions, if not subdued, and adverse circumstances, if not overcome, lead in time into the abyss. Domitian reigned fifteen years, one year longer than Nero, and his reign reproduced the same story, — at first a wise government, then every excess. Happily the excesses did not come till late; his *quinquennium* lasted thirteen years.

The two tyrannies differed again in another respect, — one had brilliant, sometimes cheerful, aspects; the other, notwithstanding the



NAUMACHIA, FROM A COIN OF DOMITIAN.

magnificence of the festivals, was sad and gloomy. The entire reign of the “bald¹ Nero” was like that of Tiberius in his latter years. Fully as vain as the son of Agrippina, Domitian heaped every title upon his own head, and decreed deification to himself. His edicts stated: “Our lord and our god ordains . . .”² The new god did not scorn vulgar honors. At the close of an inglorious expedition he assumed twenty-four lictors and the right to sit in the Senate in the garb of a conqueror.³

He was consul seventeen times, and twenty-two times caused himself to be proclaimed imperator for victories that had not always been gained. He recalled Nero again by his fondness for shows and for building; he revived the Neronian games, gave mock sea-fights, in which whole fleets were engaged, and celebrated the secular games, although hardly forty-one years had elapsed since their celebration by Claudius. A hundred races were witnessed on one day, each between four *quadrigae* that were driven five times around the course. This was more than the people asked. To sustain their flagging attention and to render the contests more

¹ Juvenal, *Sat.* iv. 38.

■ Caligula had already styled himself god; and before Domitian, the words *Dominus noster* were employed in speaking of the Emperor (Labus, *Marm. antichi bresciani*, p. 96, No. 4).

■ Martial and Statius call him *Dacicus*; but this name is not found on the coins.

animated, he supplemented the four factions or colors of the circus, green, blue, red, and white, by two new colors, gold and violet (*aurata et purpura*). Even races between young girls were seen in the stadium. The quaestors had long since abandoned the ruinous custom of exhibiting gladiatorial combats when they entered into office; Domitian forced them to resume it, and never failed to be present at all these shows. Martial praises him for having re-established a less dangerous kind of boxing.¹ He distributed three gratuities among the people, each of three hundred sesterces a head, and on one occasion he gave them a bountiful feast. Several times he had presents of all sorts thrown to the spectators, for which the knights and even the



MEMORIAL OF THE
SECULAR GAMES.²

senators struggled as greedily as the ragged plebeians; and the son of the Sabine horse-dealer took pleasure in seeing the Roman people, their pontiffs, their men of consular rank, and their praetorians, rolling at his feet in the dust to snatch the master's alms.



CONGIARIUM.³

Titus had been unable to repair all the disasters of the last conflagration; but Domitian widened several streets,⁴ reconstructed

the public buildings that had fallen, and erected many others, with more magnificence than taste.⁵ The mere gilding of the Capitol, according to Plutarch, cost him over twelve thousand talents,⁶ — “more than all Olympus is worth,” says Martial.⁷ Less irreverent

¹ *Et pugnat virtus simpliciore manu* (*Epigr.* VIII. lxxx.). [That is, without the loaded caestus. — Ed.]

² COS. XIII. LVD. SAEC. A. POP. FRVG. AC. SC. (*Ludos saeculares fecit, a populo fruges accepit.*) The Emperor, seated upon a daïs; before him two figures, clothed with togas, standing, holding paterae. Reverse of a large bronze of Domitian (Cohen, No. 83).

³ CONG. II. COS. II. SC. Domitian seated, and Liberality standing; below, a figure spreading out its garment to receive the gift. Reverse of a large bronze.

⁴ Martial, *Epigr.* VII. lxi.

⁵ Plutarch, who saw at Athens the columns of Pentelic marble which were to be used on the Capitol, says (*Public.* 17) that they were ruined at Rome in the attempt to recut them.

⁶ Plutarch, *Public.* 15. About \$13,440,000.

⁷ *Epigr.* IX. iv. 14: —

Nam tibi quod solvat, non habet arca Jovis.

In Suetonius (*Dom.* 4–5) the long and wearisome enumeration of his games and constructions may be seen.

than the poet, we will say that true art has no need of these showy adornments. The dwelling which he constructed for himself on the Palatine surpassed in magnificence everything that Rome had hitherto seen.¹



PEDIMENT OF THE FOURTH TEMPLE OF THE CAPITOL.²

The direction given by Vespasian to the imperial government continued. Domitian administered justice zealously, and very often granted extra sessions in his court in the Forum. Carefully reviewing the judgments from which an appeal was made, he annulled several decisions of the centumviri that had been prompted by favoritism, branded with infamy the corrupt judges, and banished the informers who had accused an innocent person.



FOURTH TEMPLE
OF THE CAPITOL,
RESTORED BY DOMI-
TIAN (SILVER COIN
OF A. D. 82).

Domitian proved himself the strictest ruler since Augustus with respect to public order. He assumed the title of perpetual censor, and rigorously maintained the distinction of the orders in solemnities. On one occasion he restored to his owner a slave who had fraudulently entered the army, where he had risen to the rank of centurion. He prosecuted the authors of libels, drove from the Senate a former quaestor who was too

¹ M. Rosa has recently recovered the foundations of this palace and the courses of the ground floor, so that it has been easy to restore the general plan. See the description of it in M. Boissier's *Promenades archéologiques*.

² From a sketch in the Library of Coburg. At the apex of the pediment must have been Jupiter, seated or standing in the triumphal chariot, accompanied by the two goddesses, whose statues were also together within the temple. Mars with his helmet and Minerva holding a lance are still perfectly recognizable. The Sun, the Moon, the Cyclops, a reclining River (the Tiber?) represent the Universe, in order that all creation may take part in the homage rendered to the three principal deities. (Cf. Saglio, p. 904.)

fond of pantomimes, and did two things that were very unpleasant to the common people, but one of which was very moral, and the other very necessary,—he suppressed the scandalous public exhibitions of the mimes, which were the delight of the lower orders,¹ and abolished the stalls that blocked up the streets, but gave these plebeians a livelihood.² One of the freedmen of the palace had reared a monument to his son with stones destined for the Capitol. Domitian caused the tomb to be destroyed as sacrilegious.³ His morals were not those of a censor. He seduced his brother's daughter Julia, and the "new Juno," as the Greeks called her, perished in her attempt to destroy the proof of a criminal intercourse.⁴ But if he made

JULIA, DAUGHTER OF TITUS.⁵A VESTAL.⁶

allowances for himself, he made none for others. Vespasian and Titus had connived at the misconduct of the priestesses of Vesta; but under Domitian three received orders to commit suicide, and the chief vestal, Cornelia, was entombed alive, according to the ancient custom. When the priests came to lead her to her doom, she raised her hands towards heaven, invoking Vesta and the other gods; nor did she cease repeating all along the road, "What! Caesar declares me criminal, whose sacrifices have made him triumph!" As she was descending into the fatal vault, her veil caught in the steps. She stooped to release it; and when the executioner offered to assist her in so doing, she refused with

¹ He only authorized their exhibitions at private houses. Nerva set aside this interdict, which Trajan at first renewed and then repealed after his first Dacic triumph (Pliny, *Pan.* 46).

² Martial.

³ Suet., *Dom.* 8: *Ne qua religio deum contaminaretur.*

⁴ Νέαν Ἡρα. *Bull. de corresp. hellénique*, vi. 396.

⁵ From an engraved stone (*aqua marina*), with the name Evodus cut in it (*Cabinet de France*, No. 2,089).

⁶ BELLICIAE MODESTE, Virgo Vestalis (*Bellicia Modesta, Vestal Virgin*). From a medallion in the *Cabinet de France*.

horror, as if the mere touch of his hand would defile her maiden purity. One of her supposed accomplices, a Roman knight, was scourged to death in the Forum; another, of senatorial rank, was



JULIA, DAUGHTER OF TITUS.¹

banished.² These condemnations spread terror in the city; and Statius is truthful this time when, describing the colossal statue of Domitian, he points out the bronze eyes fixed upon the temple

¹ Bust in the Uffizi Gallery.

² Pliny (*Epist.* IV. xi.) has quite a desire to make her appear innocent, in order to leave one crime more on the memory of Domitian. But he himself hardly seems to believe in this innocence; and when, under Nerva, the exiles were recalled, Cornelia's paramour, who had been banished to Sicily, was excepted. From this it appears that she was still believed to have been guilty. Suetonius has no doubt of it (*Dom.* 8), and Juvenal (*Sat.* iv. 9 and 10) affirms it. Plutarch's narration (*Quaest. Rom.* 83) refers probably to the same persons. The city was in consternation, he says; and when the priests were consulted, they had ordered that two Gauls and two Greeks should be buried alive in the Forum Boarium.

of Vesta as if to be assured that the Trojan fire is ceaselessly burning within the silent sanctuary, and that the goddess is at last satisfied with the virtue of her priestesses.¹ The *Lex Scantinia*, against a shameful vice, was rigidly enforced, even in the case of knights and senators. A man of equestrian rank had taken back his wife after having repudiated her on the charge of adultery. Domitian struck his name off the list of judges. Women who had disgraced themselves were not allowed to go in a litter, or even to receive a bequest or acquire an inheritance. He prohibited mutilation.² He also strove, like Augustus, to render enfranchisement more difficult. Finally, to draw closer the ancient bonds of clientage, he suppressed the *sportula*, which had been given by the patrons in money to the amount of twenty-five ases, and re-established the custom of meals in common (*coenae rectae*). The *rex*, as the patron was called, once more made his client sit at his table, but placed before him only some meagre food, while he himself supped magnificently.

Vespasian had begun war against effeminate habits and bad morals. Domitian continued it energetically, and Quintilian therefore calls him "the most religious censor."³ The epithet is superfluous; but the censorship was rigorous without succeeding, be it understood, in restoring "the temples to the gods and morals to the people," as Martial claims, or "in forcing modesty to return to families."⁴ Read the poet himself, and you will see the efficacy of such laws. It cannot, however, be said that these reforms were utterly useless; and when we again find virtuous society at Rome, we shall remember the severities of Vespasian and his son.

Wine-growing was the principal form of the little agriculture still existing in Italy. Domitian forbade the planting of new vines, in order to leave room for corn; and to increase the price of the wines of the peninsula, he ordered half of the old plantations in the provinces to be destroyed, — an unwise measure, which, however, was not executed. His father and brother had made the husbandmen uneasy by seizing for the treasury the waste land of the

¹ *Silvae*, I. i. 35.

² Dion, lvii. 2; Martial, *Epigr.* IX. vii. and viii.

³ *Sanctissimus censor*, iv. in *Prooem.*

⁴ Martial, *Epigr.* VI. ii. and vii.; X. cii.; Statius, *Silv.* III. iv. 74, and IV. iii. 13. Cf. Suet., *Dom.* 7, and Amm. Marcellinus, xviii. 4.

colonies. Domitian restored it to its former possessors, at the same time granting them the benefit of prescription; and "thus," says an old author, "he delivered all Italy from fear."¹

In his early days he did not appear avaricious; and with an honesty not common among Romans, he refused the inheritances of those who had children. He delivered from all prosecution debtors whose names had been posted in the treasury for more than five years; and to repress the interested zeal of informers for the rights of the treasury, he condemned accusers to exile when they did not make good their charge. "A ruler," he used to say, "who does not punish informers, encourages them."

He increased the pay of the soldiers by one third, — a measure required by the increased cost of everything since Caesar's time. The Dictator had fixed their annual pay at nine pieces of gold. It was still at this rate under Domitian, who raised it to twelve.² To prevent revolts, he forbade his officers to assemble two legions in the same camp, or to receive in the military chest, from the savings of the soldiers, more than a thousand sesterces in the name of each man.³ He wished likewise to diminish the army in order to reduce the expense; but a fear of the Barbarians prevented it.

Like his father also, Domitian, who affected to take Minerva for a patroness,⁴ encouraged arts and letters. His great works furnished occupation for artists, and we see him giving six hundred thousand sesterces at once to a philosopher to purchase an estate near the city of Prusa. In order to replace the libraries destroyed by the late conflagrations, he instituted a search for books in every quarter, and had copies of lost works made at Alexandria.⁵ A poet himself, he invited Statius and Martial to his palace, — without, however, raising them by gifts to the fortune which they still solicited. He

¹ Aggenus, *De Controv. agr.* ap. Goes., p. 68. Cf. Suet., *Dom.* 9: *Subseciva, quae divisio per veteranos agris carptim superfuerant, veteribus possessoribus ut usucapta concessit.* Cf. Orelli, No. 3,118.

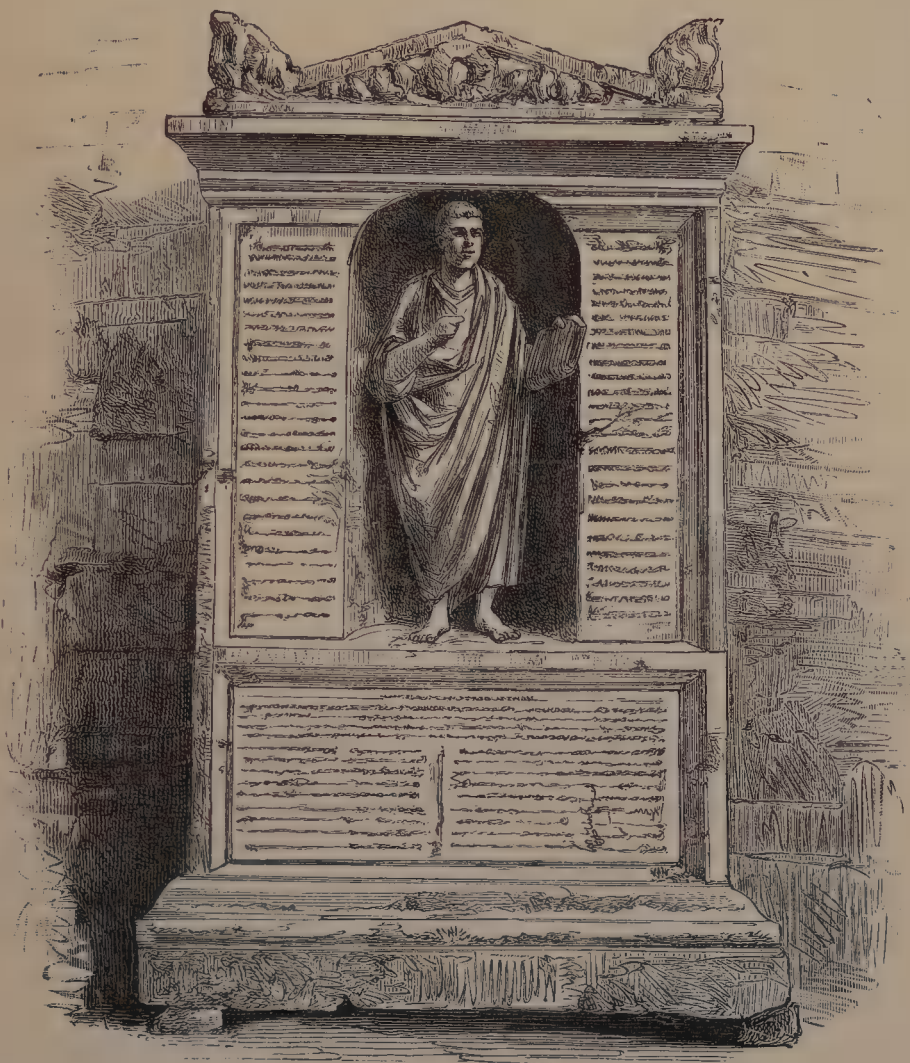
² The pay was five ases at the time of Polybius (vi. 39), or eight, taking into account the reductions, which caused sixteen ases to be reckoned to the denarius instead of ten. Caesar doubled it, ten ases (Suet., *Caes.* 26). It was then under Domitian thirteen ases = $\frac{5}{8}$ ths of a denarius a day = twenty-five denarii a month, or three hundred a year, instead of 225.

³ Each legion had its chest for savings; Saturninus, of whom we shall speak later, had taken these deposits as a pledge, to make sure of the fidelity of the soldiers.

⁴ *Familiaie numen Minervae* (Quintilian, *Inst. orat.* x. 1). Cf. Suet., *Dom.* 15.

⁵ Pliny, *Epist.* X. lxxvi.; Suet., *Dom.* 20.

received the praises of Valerius Flaccus, of Silius Italicus, and of Quintilian, to whom he intrusted the education of his youthful kinsmen;¹ and he instituted at the Capitol a quinquennial contest in poetry, eloquence, and music, which was still observed in the fifth



TOMB OF A BOY VICTORIOUS IN THE CONQUEST IN ELOQUENCE AND MUSIC.²

century (*agon Capitolinus*). Another took place every year in his Alban palace. Under him Juvenal composed his earliest satire, the Seventh. The elder Pliny had just died; but Tacitus, whom the Emperor had appointed quindecimvir and praetor (A. D. 88), had not as yet written his *Agricola*,³ and the younger Pliny, who

¹ Silius Italicus, *Punic.* iii. 618 seq.; Quintilian, *Inst. orat.* ix., in *Prooem.*

² Discovered in 1871 in one of the towers of the *porta Salaria*. The young laureate had vanquished fifty-two competitors. Two inscriptions are carved on this tomb, one containing his history, the other his Greek verses.

³ After his praetorship Tacitus withdrew from Rome; and he was still absent in A. D. 93.

had also attained the praetorship in A. D. 93, was at the height of his fame. Thus in this reign we meet with the most eminent poets of the second order, a famous prose-writer, and an author of genius who was already meditating his severe works. We find also the celebrated juriconsults Palfurius and Armillatus, whom Juvenal reproaches with unduly multiplying the imperial prerogatives,¹ and, most important of all, the chief of the disciples of Proculus, Pegasus, whom the Emperor appointed prefect of Rome, and whom the satirist is forced to call "a most devout interpreter of the laws."² Thanks to the many wise advisers who since the time of Augustus had followed each other in uninterrupted succession in the imperial councils, civil society — sheltered as it was by its subordinate position from the tempests that devastated the political world — became better organized every day. This continued for many years to be the case, and the worst reigns contained the most precious conquests of the spirit of civil law.

We have no details concerning the administration of Domitian in the provinces. Some inscriptions testify that he carried forward there the public works which his father had begun, and we may believe that his authority proved equitable and firm when we read these words of a biographer by no means friendly to him, — "He succeeded so well in curbing the magistrates of Rome and the governors of the provinces that they were never more disinterested or just;"³ or when we recollect that one of the most active

Was it in consequence of banishment? This has been asserted; but everything is opposed to the supposition, and Borghesi (vii. 322) thinks that, according to custom, Tacitus, at the expiration of his praetorship, received the command of a legion or the government of an imperial province, — probably Belgica, — where his father had been procurator, and where he finished collecting materials for his work *De Moribus Germaniae*.

¹ Juvenal, *Sat.* iv. 53:—

*Quidquid conspicuum pulchrumque est aequore toto,
Res fisci est.*

In respect to Palfurius, see above, p. 157.

² . . . *Optimus atque*

Interpres legum sanctissimus. — JUVENAL, *Sat.* iv. 78, 79.

■ Suet., *Dom.* 8. The selections of Domitian were often happy. He advanced Tacitus (*Hist.* i. 1), Pliny, the father of Trajan, etc.; he appointed as consuls, Nerva, Trajan, Verginius Rufus, Agricola, the grandfather of Antoninus; the father of Tacitus was probably governor of Belgium, which Tacitus ruled from 90 to 92 (Borghesi, vii. 199 and 321, etc.). Valerius Maximus extolled the government of Domitian to Trajan. "He was a detestable ruler," said he, "but one who knew whom to trust." He added: *Meliorē esse rem publicam et prope tutiorem in qua princeps malus est, ea in qua sunt amici principis mali* (Lampridius, *Alex. Sev.* 65).

informers, Baebius Massa, accused by the inhabitants of Baetica, was convicted on the pleading of Senecio and the younger Pliny. Suetonius adds these words, which furnish much occasion for thought: "The majority of those whom he forced to be just and upright we have seen since his time accused of all sorts of crimes,"—which means that under the milder administration that followed his, they made up for their compulsory rectitude. The Emperors who have been most decried—I am not speaking of madmen like Caligula and Nero, but of shrewd rulers such as Tiberius and Domitian—were a terror to the nobility; and when the dangers of their position had developed in them the cruelty natural to this people, whose keenest pleasure was to see blood, they struck all around them without pity. But, as we have already said, the sole question for eighty millions of men was to have peace and order.

After having delineated the absolute power of the Emperors, the provincial Appian adds: "This form of government has now lasted nearly two hundred years, and in that space of time the city has been adorned in a marvellous manner, the revenues of the Empire have increased, while, by the boon of a constant peace, the people have reached the highest pitch of prosperity." We see what importance the provincials attached to the tragedies enacted at Rome. At most, these seemed to them but lessons in equality given to men who scarcely comprehended it, and a sort of duel between the rich of yesterday and the rich of to-morrow. With the fabulist whom "standards and plumes" terrified, they drew from the spectacle of such terrible vicissitudes this moral: "The common people always escape, but the leaders fall.¹ Delation takes away what delation bestowed." Horace had already celebrated, in the time of Augustus, the *aurea mediocritas*; Martial again extols it in the days of Domitian. Under rulers who can bestow all things but can also take all away, this is the desire of the wise.

There were several wars in the reign of Domitian, all defensive, excepting the expedition against the Catti, which was only a great measure in the interests of public order to drive away marauders from the frontier.²

¹ Phaedrus, *Fab.* iv. 6.

² The consul Frontinus, a contemporary, says of the Catti: *Qui in armis erant. . . . Nec ignoraret (Domitianus) majore bellum molitione inituros* (*Strat.*, i. 8).

If the younger Pliny and Tacitus are to be believed, these wars were like those which Caligula waged: Domitian's victories were defeats; his captives, purchased slaves; his triumphs, audacious falsehoods. Suetonius is not so severe; but he would not have failed to be so—he who relates with so much complacency the disgraceful adventures of Caius on the Rhine and on the shore of the Channel—if Domitian had renewed the comedy of Caligula, procuring himself provincials “of triumphal stature.” But Suetonius was writing neither the *Panegyric of Trajan* nor the *Agricola*; he had no anxiety to eclipse, in behalf of his Emperor, all other imperial renown, nor to magnify the fame of a subordinate by hinting at the mighty deeds the latter would have performed but for the jealousy of his chief. “Domitian,” he says, “made several wars; some that he undertook of his own accord, and others that he could not avoid, such as the expedition against the Sarmatians, who had destroyed a legion, and the two campaigns against the Dacians to avenge two defeats sustained by his troops. After several battles, some of which were victories, others defeats, he celebrated a double triumph, and offered to Jupiter Capitolinus a laurel crown.”¹

DOMITIANUS GERMANICUS.²

The Empire was constrained, for its own security, to make its power felt from time to time by the restless hordes that bordered its double frontier on the Rhine and the Danube; and Domitian, in undertaking this task himself, did but follow the example of his most illustrious predecessors. During the revolt of Civilis, the Catti (Nassau, Hesse, and part of Westphalia) had attempted to surprise Mayence. Vespasian had not deemed it prudent to avenge this insult; Domitian thought that after two reigns during which the ruler was never absent from Rome it was necessary for him, even in the interest of his own security, to show himself to the legions and put an end

¹ Dom. 6. Aurel. Victor (*De Caes.* ii.) says also: *Dacis et Cattorum manu devictis*, and (*Epist.* ii.): *Cattos, Germanosque devicit*, which explains the words *victis parcentia foedera Cattis* of Statius (*Silv.* iii. 3, 168).

² IMP. CAES. DOMIT. AVG. GERM. P. M. TR. POT. V. (Silver medallion in the *Cabinet de France*).



DOMITIAN (STATUE IN THE VATICAN, BRACCIO NUOVO, NO. 129).

to their long inactivity by some few expeditions of no danger. In A.D. 84 he placed himself at the head of the army on the Rhine, penetrated into the territory of the Catti, who fell back into the depths of their forests, and on his return assumed the title of Germanicus, which he did not merit, for an expedition without battles or conquests. Nevertheless a military writer, who perhaps took part in this campaign, Frontinus, speaks of it with praise,¹ and it seems to have attained the desired end, since on the Rhine peace was not once disturbed during this reign.

GERMANY CAPTIVE.²

The selection of Trajan for the government of Upper Germany shows that Domitian wished a strict supervision in that quarter.³ The new general, in spite of his fighting temper, bent his energies to constructing a powerful line of defence by covering the south-west of Germany with a chain of fortified posts, earth embankments, and intrenchments, traces of which are found here and there under the names of "Devil's Walls," "Heathen's Moats," and the like, from the Rhine, below Mayence, to the Danube, near Ratisbon. Drusus, Tiberius, and Germanicus had commenced these works a century before opposite Bonn, and had extended them in a line parallel to the Rhine through Westphalia,—perhaps as far as the Taunus, whose numerous hot springs early attracted the Romans.

The valley of the Upper Danube, in ancient times peopled by Celts, had been Germanized by the Teutons and the Suevi. But after the defeat of Ariovistus and the retreat of the Marcomanni upon Bohemia, especially when Augustus had taken possession of the right bank of the Danube and covered the left bank of the

¹ *Strateg.* i. 1, 8; ii. 11, 7.

² GERMANIA CAPTA. Trophy between a German seated upon a shield and a German standing; at the feet of the latter, helmet and shield. Great bronze. Cohen, No. 135.

³ According to the general opinion, from Tillemont to M. des Vergers (*Chron. du règne de Trajan*), it was Domitian who gave this province to Trajan; according to Mommsen (*Étude sur Plin.*, in the *Bibl. de l'École des hautes études*, p. 10, n. 2) and Dierauer (*Gesch. Traj.* p. 15), it would be Nerva; but their strongest proof is an antithesis of Pliny which even Burnouf has been unable to take literally. Another passage shows that in the last year of Domitian, Trajan occupied a very prominent position, *omnibus excelsior*, (*Pan.* 94); and if this nomination had been made by Nerva, Pliny would not have failed to extract some oratorical effect from this prudent choice.

Rhine with camps and colonies, this corner of Germany, bounded by the Rhine and in which the Danube takes its rise, had no



THE GODDESS ROME.²

longer been tenable by the Barbarians. A multitude of Gauls had come back to these deserted fields; and, in return for Roman protection, paid the Empire the tithe of their harvests (*agri decumates*). To protect their farms and a territory which would have opened Gaul and Helvetia to the Germans, the works commenced on the Lower Rhine were continued to the Danube. Many rulers down to Probus applied themselves to this, although it is not possible to give each his due. Domitian gave particular attention to it; for, according to Frontinus,² he had a line of defence constructed, a hundred and twenty miles long. During the revolt of a legate, of which we shall speak later, the Germans had pene-

trated as far as the Rhine and threatened Gaul; and Trajan was without doubt charged to prevent a like danger. There is a difference of opinion respecting the plan of fortifications, which, crossing the Taunus and the Suabian Alps, seems to have enveloped the lower valley of the Mein, where lies the great road into Central Germany, and the whole basin of the Neckar. Under cover of these defences, which threw the Germans back upon the centre of

¹ *Strateg.* i. 3, 10: . . . *limitibus per centum viginti millia passuum actis.*

² *Statue of the Capitol, Mus. Cap.* i. 10.

their country, the number of inhabitants of the tithe-lands (*agri decumates*) increased. This population had its religious and political centre at Arae Flaviae (Rothweil, on the Neckar), where it was customary to assemble and adore the divinity of Rome and the Emperors. This was, as it were, a new province formed at the expense of the repressed barbaric world, just as new land is obtained by driving back with dikes the overflowing waters.¹

In the interior of Germany Domitian formed useful alliances without involving his armies. He sent money to a chief of the Cherusci, but refused to support him with troops; and he persuaded the king of the Semnones to come to Rome with the virgin Ganna, who had succeeded Velleda as prophetess of the Germans. These two persons returned home loaded with presents, and brought back to their country an idea of Roman might that was worth more for the tranquillity of the frontiers than a victory of the legions.²

In Britain the same policy was pursued and the same works were executed. Since the heavy blows struck by Plautius under Claudius, and by Suetonius Paulinus under Nero, war had been almost stopped, and civilization had begun its work. We have seen³ with what rapidity Roman manners, commerce, and usury had spread throughout the island. Vespasian, who had distinguished himself in the first campaigns of the conquest, wished to finish the undertaking of Claudius, and had sent to Britain three skilful generals in succession, — at first, Cerialis and Frontinus, who quelled the Brigantes and the Silures, two dreaded nations in the north and southwest; then, in 78, Agricola, who subdued the Ordovices, in the centre of Wales and the Isle of Man. The whole of Britain was then conquered and pacified as far as the Highlands of Scotland.



COIN REPRESENTING
BRITAIN.⁴

Agricola approached these mountains; but halted at the isthmus, thirty miles in breadth, which extends between the two seas, from the Clyde to the Firth of Forth, and covered this space with strongholds connected by an intrenchment, so as to secure the

¹ Tacitus, *Germ.* 29; Martial, *Epigr.* X. vii.

³ Vol. IV. chap. lxxv. sect. ii.

² Dion, lxxvii. 5.

⁴ Bruce, *The Roman Wall*, p. 15.

province against the incursions of the mountaineers. The latter came bravely to the attack; but he defeated them at the foot of the Grampians, notwithstanding the bravery of their chief, Galgac, to whom Tacitus ascribes a speech which no Roman ear heard, and no Latin could have understood. The legions, after this success, retired behind their line of defence; but the fleet reconnoitred the northerly parts of the island, the Orkneys, and perhaps the Shetlands.



FRAGMENT OF ROMAN WALL CONTAINING THE NAME OF AGRICOLA.¹

Tacitus insists that Domitian became alarmed at Agricola's renown. But no very brilliant fame could be gained in these combats, which were almost without peril, against tribes few in numbers, badly armed, and so poor that, in his scanty booty, the conqueror did not find a trophy to display before the people of Rome. Agricola, a slow and methodical captain, had not the great qualities which render generals formidable to a suspicious government; an honest man, a good citizen, submissive to law and the ruler, he could not have caused anxiety to an Emperor who did not fear to give the consulship and his best army to Trajan. Agricola has been overrated; he neither conquered nor

¹ From Great Britain. See Bruce, *The Roman Wall*, p. 82. [The name here belongs to an inferior officer, *optio*. — ED.]

civilized Britain, as his son-in-law would lead us to believe, but by two victories and by useful works he worthily filled a period of command whose duration, seven years (A. D. 78-84), was greater than ordinary.¹ Tacitus is obliged to say that Domitian proposed his recall in the Senate "with lofty praises, at the same time decreeing to him the triumphal decorations, a statue crowned with laurel, and the other honors which supply the place of the ancient triumph." But he takes care to add that Agricola re-entered Rome modestly by night, without display; that the Emperor received him coldly, though offering him the government of Syria; and finally that Agricola had the wisdom to refuse what it was hoped he would not accept. The suspicious tyrant and the great general in disgrace make one of those gloomy pictures in which Tacitus excels; but when we remember the signal honors bestowed upon his father-in-law, and the favor which he himself enjoyed with Domitian,² we can see that it was useful, under Nerva, to appear a victim of his predecessor. Agricola lived nine years longer,³ "without seeking, by vain display, fame and some fatal destiny. Let those who admire every imprudent word, every audacious and guilty act, learn by this example that, even under a bad ruler, there may be great citizens; that moderation and obedience, if ability and firmness are there, give glory as well as those ambitious deaths which do not help the state." By these words Tacitus justifies the wise reserve of his father-in-law, and in the same breath condemns those useless acts of temerity which he has so often glorified in his *Annals* and *Histories*.

In recalling Agricola, Domitian without doubt intended to inaugurate a peace policy in Britain which would permit him to reduce his military expenses. We have seen that he imposed the same conduct upon Trajan, who, but a few steps from splendid battle-fields where so many generals had gained renown, was obliged to restrain his ardor. When the Lygii, at war with Slavonic tribes,

¹ Borghesi (*Œuvres*, iii. 188) prolongs to the end of the year 85 Agricola's command in Britain. The usual duration of the legateship in Britain, according to Hübner (*Rhein. Mus.* xii. 57) was three years.

² *Dignitas nostra . . . a Domitiano longius protracta* (*Hist.* i. 1). The *Life of Agricola* was written A. D. 97, after the assassination of Domitian.

■ When he died there was a rumor of poison. "We had no proof," says Tacitus, "which authorizes me to affirm it." This reserve on the part of Tacitus is an acquittal for Domitian.

tried by a demand for aid to entangle the Empire in their quarrels, Domitian sent them a hundred knights, some money and promises. At another point of Germany a terrible struggle broke out; one tribe, the Bructeri, suffered a great disaster "by special favor of the gods towards us. Heaven did not even refuse us the



DACIAN KING.¹

spectacle of this combat, in which sixty thousand Barbarians fell, not by the sword of the Romans, but under their eyes and for their diversion. May the nations persevere in this hatred of one another!"² From the days of Tiberius, this homicidal prayer was the basis of the imperial policy towards the Barbarians.

The Dacians, established in the vast steppes, now inhabited by the Hungarians, Transylvanians, and Roumanians, from the Tanaïs

¹ Bust in the Museum of Naples, No. 223 in the Catalogue.

² Tac., *Germ.* 33.

to the Black Sea, with lofty mountains for refuge, had for a century past greatly increased in numbers. Life is easy in these fertile plains, where the same field yields corn ten years in succession without being exhausted, — plains that nourish with their flocks a large part of western Europe, while the mountainous region is one of the richest on the continent in mines of gold, silver, iron, copper, and rock-salt. Up to the time of which we now speak, the Dacians had not been troublesome neighbors. We hear of several incursions during the reign of Tiberius, but there was no serious invasion except at the time of the Vitellian war, when Antonius had left Moesia exposed by drawing towards the Alps the troops intrusted with its defence. Even this invasion cannot have been very formidable, since it only required one legion to stop it, and a few reinforcements sent later to restore quiet along the Danube.¹

As long as these tribes remained isolated, they were not dangerous; but we have seen that in the time of Julius Caesar one of their chiefs, Byrebistas, had united the Dacians to the Getae and formed a vast empire, comprising for a short time the whole valley of the Danube from Noricum to the Euxine.² It appears that a similar revolution was accomplished among the hordes settled on the north of the river in the Flavian era, and that they had rallied about a skilful and determined chief, using to admirable advantage the methods of war common among Barbarians, — audacious incursions and rapid flight, — but capable also of employing the tactics of regular warfare. Like Maroboduus in the days of Augustus, the Decebalus³ dreamed of establishing for himself a great empire; and knowing that Roman tactics would double the strength of his warlike bands, and that civilization would enable him to profit by immense resources lying useless in the hands of his people, he attracted deserters from the legions and artisans from the provinces, while at the same time he formed friendly relations with all his neighbors and sent emissaries to the Parthians.⁴ When he considered himself prepared, he crossed the Danube, overthrew one

¹ Tac., *Hist.* iii. 46.

² Vol. IV. p. 122 *seq.*

■ This word, which would signify, according to Sanscrit etymology, *Dhâvakabala*, "The strength of the Dacians," seems not to be a proper name, but a title.

⁴ Pliny, *Epist.* x. 16.

legion, killed the governor of Lower Moesia, Oppius Sabinus, and laid waste all the right bank of the river as far as the foot of the mountains. Domitian had to avenge this insult. In the summer of A. D. 86 he proceeded to Moesia, where an army was assembling



DOMITIAN, WITH CROWN OF LAUREL AND BREASTPLATE.¹

under command of the praetorian prefect, Cornelius Fuscus; and after the first operations, which drove the Barbarians back upon the left bank, he returned to Italy. The following year (A. D. 87) Fuscus passed the river, ventured imprudently away from its shores, and then had to retreat disastrously, losing an eagle, a legion, and his life. This check was repaired in the following year by Calpurnius Julianus, governor of Upper Moesia, who conquered the Dacians in a great battle, laid waste their country, and induced them to beg for peace.

In spite of his defeat, the Decebalus seems to have retained his pride, and Domitian, notwithstanding his victory, exercised moderation. This war wearied him: he desired to end it without disputing over the conditions (December, A. D. 89); and since the Dacians had delivered up the Roman arms, the prisoners in their possession, and hostages, he withdrew his legions from their territory, on condition that they in turn would respect that which belonged to the Empire. The ambassadors of the Decebalus went to Rome and carried to the Senate a letter from their prince, which without doubt contained a pledge, and his brother (?) Diegis

¹ Bust from the Museum of the Louvre.

proceeded to the Roman camp to receive a crown from the hand of Domitian, as if the Barbarian chief was reduced to the rank of princes who owed their royalty to Rome. In order to ratify the friendship with his new ally, Domitian sent him as a present, money, curious objects taken from the imperial palace, and artisans skilled in all kinds of work.

This peace did not extend the frontiers of the Empire.¹ But Augustus and Tiberius had not wished Roman dominion to cross the Rhine and the Euphrates; and, like them, Domitian thought that it was not prudent to extend it over the Danube. The same, too, came to be Hadrian's opinion, when he abandoned the conquests of Trajan beyond the Euphrates. This prudent policy obtained for Domitian the shame of being called the tributary of Barbarians by his second successor's courtiers, who extolled the conqueror of Dacia as the avenger of Roman honor.

The words of Suetonius quoted above, and the facts which we know, conflict with the idea of a tribute paid to the Dacians. Pliny himself, who with his warlike Emperor returned to the principle that Rome does not treat, but commands — Pliny, in his *Panegyric of Trajan*, alludes only to a peace debated between the Romans and the Barbarians, just as all agreements are effected, and to hostages obtained, he says, in exchange for presents, — as if the hostages whom the Emperor received were not by their very name, *obsides*, the avowal of the defeat of his enemies.² But these presents were an old usage of the imperial policy. In this way Nero treated Tiridates of Armenia; and we have seen Augustus doing still more for the kings of the Parthians.³ Already even

¹ Dion, lxviii. 6, 10. Eckhel (*Doctr. Num.* iv. 381) says that there does not exist a single coin that can furnish the least indication about this war.

² *Ne inducias quidem nisi aequis conditionibus inibant . . . obsides non emimus . . . nec immensis muneribus paciscimur* (*Pan.* 11 and 12). Dion says expressly that Domitian paid an annual tribute; but Suetonius and Pliny, both contemporaries, do not say so, and they would not have failed to insist upon this disgrace. We have seen the words of Suetonius and Pliny's reasons. As to Dion, we no longer possess his text for his last books, and it is difficult to extricate ourselves from the contradictions of Xiphilinus. Thus, sect. 7 of book lxvii. is unintelligible, and the account of the great victory of Julianus is placed in sect. 10, after the peace had been concluded. Moreover, even if he speaks of the tribute in book lxviii. 6, he does not allude to it in book lxvii. 7, where he affirms, on the contrary, that the Decebalus δεινῶς ἐτεταλαίπωρηντο. Eutropius (vii. 15) says also, without comment, that Domitian triumphed over the Dacians.

■ Vol. IV. p. 97. Nero had given Tiridates architects and workmen to rebuild his capital,

the Emperors were taking into their service entire bands of Barbarians, such as that cohort of Usipii whose strange history is related by Tacitus;¹ and Vespasian's generals had granted a sum of money to the Sarmatians and Dacians along the banks of the Danube to guard the passages of the stream, as the English, the Russians, and even the Americans have pensioned so many rajahs, sultans, and chiefs living on their frontiers. Domitian renewed this military pay under form of presents. Trajan himself and Hadrian did not act otherwise. This policy, which armed Barbarians against Barbarians, was excellent with a powerful Empire and valiant armies; but it will become a danger and disgrace when military virtues have been lost, and when the pickets and scouts paid by the Empire to guard the country in front of the line of *castra stativa*, no longer feeling behind them the mighty reserve of legions, conduct to the pillage of the provinces those whom they were at first charged to watch and keep in check.

The Marcomanni, the Quadi, whom Tiberius had established on the left bank of the Danube, and the Sarmatian Iazyges (between the Tanaïs and the Danube) had refused to aid the Empire during the Dacian war. Threatened with an attack by the army in Pannonia, they sent deputies to the Emperor, who were put to death. We do not know how this affair terminated, which was serious, since one legion perished in it,² and Dion shows Domitian a fugitive before these tribes. Nevertheless, during the last six years of this reign we hear nothing of any trouble on this frontier, which leads us to think that, by force or money, everything had ended happily.

About the year 89, when the Dacian war was not fully ended,³ a pretended Nero appeared in the East. The Parthians prepared

Artaxata (Suet., *Nero*). We shall see later that Trajan also gave a pension to the king of the Roxolani (Spartian, *Hadr.* 6).

¹ *Agric.* 28.

² Tacitus says (*Hist.* i. 2): *Coortae in nos Sarmatarum et Suevorum gentes*. Statius naturally enlarges upon it: *horrida bella* (*Silv.* iii. 3, 170). During Nerva's reign there were several outbreaks in Pannonia which terminated favorably for the Romans (Pliny, *Paneg.* 8). The chronology of Domitian's reign is very difficult to settle. Henzen (*Scavi nel bosco sacro de' fratelli Arvali*, p. 107) shows that in the year 89 Domitian was absent from Rome, perhaps for the war in Pannonia.

³ The triumph for the Dacian war was celebrated, according to Eusebius, in the tenth year of Domitian's reign, and according to Martial, in the month of January; consequently in January A. D. 91.

to support him; but a threatening letter from Domitian forced them to surrender the imposter.

In Africa the Nasamones, already rebellious under Vespasian, rose in revolt again. They were almost exterminated, and Cyrenaica and the region of Tripoli were at last delivered from the continual depredations of these nomads.¹

The Empire preserved, then, its strong military position; the provinces were tranquil; the frontiers were well guarded; and though they gained a few transient successes, the Barbarians felt its powerful hand upon them. One thing alone is sad to see, — Rome, and especially the palace. Instead of the wise administrator whom we have hitherto found there, we shall meet a tyrant whose memory has been justly scourged.

III. — CRUELITIES DURING THE LAST YEARS OF DOMITIAN.

DOMITIAN did not rush into crime through fondness for blood and brutal caprice. He used often to say that the number of punishments does not depend upon the ruler, and that those who punish least are not especially the good, but those who have been fortunate enough to find small occasion for harsh measures.² The words do not come from a monster of cruelty; only he should have added that there are governments capable of keeping the number of chastisements small, because they know how to prevent their necessity. Domitian, on the contrary, suspicious and anxious, multiplied them by the very terror which he felt and by that which he inspired.

Suetonius explains his tyranny in a few words, — “His conduct was at first a mixture of good and evil; but little by little his virtues became vices;



COIN WITH LEGEND :
FISCI IUDAICI
CALUMNIA SUBLATA.

¹ This revolt, Zonaras and Eusebius affirm, was caused by Domitian's extortions. But what could he take from these nomads whom Herodotus shows us living on locusts? The remnant of this tribe settled in the south of Marmarica.

■ Dion, lxxvii. 2.

need rendered him avaricious, fear made him cruel (*inopia rapax, metu saevus*).” Vespasian had certainly left his sons an ample treasury. Titus impaired it by his prodigality, and Domitian exhausted it by the enormous cost of his constructions and shows, especially by the increase in the soldiers’ pay, which must have raised the annual expenditure by fifty million sesterces. He began by being very strict about the receipt of taxes. “There is one tax,” says Suetonius, “the collection of which was prosecuted with great harshness,—that of the double drachma, which the Jews had to pay. From every quarter information was received in the treasury against those who were living in the Jewish religion without making public profession of it, or who dissimulated their origin so as to escape the tribute imposed upon their nation.”¹ An empty treasury has always caused, with unscrupulous rulers, an odious policy. Domitian again put himself on the track of wills. To effect the seizure of an estate, it was enough for any person to affirm he had heard the deceased say before his death that Caesar was his heir. The law of treason became again a resource; a word, an imprudent act, entailed the loss of all possessions.

Domitian’s cruelty appeared especially, and perhaps we should say only,² after the revolt of a person of high rank, Antonius Saturninus, who claimed to be a descendant of the triumvir and of that factious tribune whom the Italians had wished to proclaim king.³ Being in command of two legions in Germany, he incited them to revolt, and called the Germans to his aid. A sudden thaw detained the latter on the right bank of the Rhine, while Appius Norbanus Maximus, governor of Aquitania,⁴ crushed Antonius on the opposite shore. This rebel surely counted on others besides the Barbarian allies to whom he so patriotically opened the Empire. To threaten his Emperor with only two legions, he must have

¹ Suet., *Dom.* 12. *Interfuisse me*, he adds, *adolescens memini, cum a procuratore frequentissimoque concilio inspiceretur nonagenarius senex, an circumsectus esset*. The medal given on p. 199, with the legend, *Fisci judaici calumnia sublata*, recalls the efforts of the treasury to frustrate the frauds (*calumnia*) contrived by the Jews and Judaizers to escape the impost. The palm-tree is one of the symbols of Judaea.

² . . . *aliquanto post civilis belli victoriam saevior* (*ibid.* 10). Suetonius says that the civil war increased his cruelty; but he enumerates *before* the revolt executions which we learn from Tacitus did not occur until *after*.

³ See Vol. II. pp. 550 *seq.*

⁴ See L. Renier, *Comptes rendus de l’Acad. des inscr.* 1872, pp. 423 *seq.*

had accomplices elsewhere, at Rome especially. Consequently Norbanus was careful to burn with all haste the correspondence of the vanquished leader. Domitian in terror sought after these conspirators, and pursued them with fury. This revolt must belong to the year 93, which, as Pliny says,¹ is that wherein Domitian's great cruelties began. Thus three contemporary authors show us tyranny following upon provocation, the latter not justifying the former, but certainly explaining it. "Many senators," Suetonius goes on to say, "some of whom had been consuls, were put to death as instigators of plots."² Nor were these plots in all cases imaginary. In republics new political questions arise daily; under a despotic government, where men are not as yet moulded to a servile obedience, there is but one question,—a change of masters. Out of eleven Emperors, if we include Julius Caesar, seven, up to this time, had perished by the sword or by poison,—a proof of the frightful condition of public affairs; but also "among the nobles old age is a miracle."⁴ The

THE YOUNG DOMITIAN.³

¹ Pliny was praetor in A. D. 93 (Mommsen, *op. cit.* p. 79), and he had obtained this office before the Emperor *profiteretur odium bonorum* (*Pan.* 95). Tacitus, for his part, says (*Agric.* 44, 45) that at the death of his father-in-law, August 23d, A. D. 93, the delations of Metius Carus had as yet been only once successful, *et intra Albanam arcem sententia Messalini strepebat et Massa Baebius jam tum reus erat*. Since, in the opinion of Suetonius, and also in accordance with probability, the *civile nefas* of Antonius and the excesses of the tyranny are in the relation of cause to effect, the certain date of the effect gives as the probable date of the cause the year 93, probably its latter half.

² *Molitores rerum novarum* (*Dom.* 10). Dion (lxvii. 13) speaks of one Juventius Celsus in the year 95 . . . *συννομόσας ἀνὰ πρώτους μετὰ τινων ἐν' αὐτῷ*.

³ Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 24.

⁴ *Prodigio par est in nobilitate senectus* (*Juv., Sat.* iv. 97).

poet spoke truly, — the old families were dying out with extreme rapidity. To secure certain religious functions, Augustus, and later Claudius, had been obliged to create patricians; and now Vespasian had just done the same. That among these victims of the Emperors there were many innocent men, that many were slain on the most trivial pretexts, is in the highest degree probable. But the old Roman aristocracy, after living in a state of perpetual conspiracy against Vespasian¹ and his son, had reason to expect that the ruler whose life was constantly threatened should defend himself by punishments. It was a hard condition, imposed alike upon the Emperor and the nobles, — upon the former by the right of self-defence and the natural disposition to revenge; upon the latter by the deceitful memories of republican times and by the too great temptation to overthrow a government whose existence was at the mercy of an assassin's blow. In the early days of a new reign, in the outburst of joy and hope, there was always an effort to come to an understanding, — hence peaceful beginnings; but the sad and implacable necessities of an unfortunate situation were not slow in developing, and, hatred growing constantly more bitter,² each new victim called for a new avenger or a new punishment.

One thing only could have terminated this fearful strife. Between these inveterate enemies law should have been interposed, protecting the ruler against his own excesses, the nobles against their ambition. But this elementary law of the Empire had not as yet been written.

War also, the occupation of camps, the fame of martial deeds, would have brought a truce to these domestic strifes. A poet of this reign, the matron Sulpicia, laments the peace which leaves these exasperated adversaries too long in each other's presence. Like Cato, she calls for reverses which will re-awaken patriotism.

¹ *Assiduas conjurationes* (Suet., *Vesp.* 25). Juvenal also says that Brutus would not have been able to deceive these new kings, and adds: *Quis enim jam non intelligat artes patricias?* (*Sat.* iv. 101.) This is not in contradiction to what has been said on p. 649; time was required before the effects of the reform instituted by Vespasian could be produced, and it has already been explained that while this reform diminished the number of conspiracies, it did not, certainly, suppress them altogether, for the reason that they were, even under the best of rulers, of the very essence of the government itself.

² Domitian had made the fortune of Tacitus; from the hatred shown this Emperor by a man whom he had raised to honor, we may judge what were the sentiments of others.

“Yes, reverses, to make Rome strong again, to arouse her from the soft and enervating languor of a fatal peace.”¹ Juvenal, also a contemporary, repeats this war-cry. But in this degenerate age it met no response.²

Later, Trajan will hear it, and his military exploits and the fame of them will give his reign its spotless and glorious internal tranquillity. But Parthia was now at peace, Dacia had been pacified, the Germans were held in check, and Britain was conquered. Domitian, who owed nothing to war, in which, indeed, he had been usually unsuccessful, remained at Rome in the presence of the Senate, like Tiberius, without an heir and without support, — hence, like Tiberius, constantly in danger. “A ruler is never believed,” he



DOMITILLA, MOTHER OF DOMITIAN.³

said, — and two great Emperors, Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius, in their turn will repeat his words, — “a ruler is never believed in what he says of the plots formed against his life until he has fallen a victim to them.”⁴ Feeling himself surrounded by assassins, Domitian had no longer a moment of tranquillity. He constantly

¹ *Somno moriuntur obeso.*

Romulidarum igitur longa et gravis exitium pax (vv. 56, 57).

² *Nunc patimur longae pacis mala* (*Sat.* vi. 293).

³ Only known likeness of Domitilla. Colossal marble head found near Puteoli at the same time with a head of Domitian (Campana Museum, d'Escamps, *op. cit.* No. 79).

⁴ Suet., *Dom.* 20; Vulc. Gallicanus, *Avid. Cass.* 2.

changed his praetorian prefects, lest they should gain the confidence of the soldiers, and he divided the duties of the urban prefect among a dozen magistrates, fearing to intrust so much authority to any one man.¹ He at last withdrew almost completely from all



DOMITIA LONGINA, WIFE OF DOMITIAN.²

intercourse with men, and lived, sad and idle, with no other occupation than the reading of the Memoirs of Tiberius. But Tiberius at least had friends; the son of Vespasian and Domitilla was alone. The imperial palace at Rome was his Island of Capri; and this solitude, harboring infamies which Capri had not known, was peopled with like terrors. With a strange weakness, which however was general at that time, Domitian believed in Destiny, and yet hoped to outwit it by the aid of his executioners. The astrologers had terrified him with predictions of evil; to discover and kill the successor, whom no man can kill, he caused the horoscope of persons of importance to be cast, and struck wherever his

suspensions rested. Thus perished an ex-consul—to whom the Chaldaeans had promised brilliant fortune—and Sabinus, the Emperor's cousin, for the reason that the herald who was to proclaim him consul had by accident used the word *imperator* instead,—in the eyes of many Romans an infallible presage. Informers, who had been proscribed, now re-appeared. Their trade had hitherto been lucrative, as we know; but never before had they assumed such

¹ Lydus, *De Magistratibus*, ii. 19. Alexander Severus did nearly the same thing by adding to the *praefectus urbi* fourteen *curatores* (Lamp., *Alex. Sev.* 32).

² Bust found upon the Caelian Hill (Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 25).

arrogance and cynicism of cruelty. Metius Carus was wont to say: "Do not interfere with my dead men," speaking of those whom he had caused to be proscribed. He would let no one speak ill of them; they were his property, a source of pride to him; he chose to have them honored, that he himself might thereby be made more formidable,—the pride of an assassin boasting that his victims were all men of rank. In those days men saw dragged to the Gemoniae the real or supposed accomplices of Antonius Saturninus, those whom the stars denounced, those whom wealth, or birth, or the independence of their opinions seemed to render dangerous. In this last list were the Stoic philosophers Herennius Senecio, who had written a life of Helvidius, and Junius Rusticus, who had eulogized Thræsea. "Tyranny," says Tacitus, "extended its rage even to their works, and caused to be burned, by the triumvirs' hands, the writings of these great men in the place where once a free people assembled. A strange madness, which thought itself able to stifle in these flames the voice of the Roman people, the Senate's liberty, and the conscience of the human race!"¹

The son of Helvidius bore a dangerous name, and in an interlude which he composed, under the title of "Paris and Oenone," was believed to refer to the Emperor's conjugal misfortunes;² Maternus declaimed against tyrants; Salvius celebrated the birthday of his uncle, the Emperor Otho: and all three of them were put to death. A woman having undressed in the presence of the Emperor's statue, paid for this disrespect with her life. In the room of Metius Pomposianus was found a map of the world and some of Livy's discourses; Lucullus in Britain had allowed the troops to call by his name a new kind of lances: both were condemned. The case of Epaphroditus was brought up,—that freedman of Nero who, by the latter's order, had aided his master in taking his own life. Thus to have obeyed was criminal; a man who, even at Caesar's command, had shed the blood of Caesar could not be allowed to live, and Domitian caused him to be put to death.

As in the reign of Nero, and from the same causes, free thought

¹ *Agric.* 2.

² The intrigue of the Empress with Paris, the actor, was well known. The Emperor had caused Paris to be murdered in the open street, and had repudiated Domitia. Being much attached to her, he had, however, received her again, on pretext of yielding to the public entreaty (*Suet. Dom.* 3; *Dion.* lxxvii. 3).

was reputed seditious; all philosophers were expelled from Rome: "he would have liked to drive out all virtue and all knowledge," says Tacitus.¹ But Domitian was not insane to that degree, and his decree of exile was, considering the harshness of the times, only a measure analogous to modern European laws in respect to the press. Certain of these sages, like Artemidorus, whom Pliny ventured to visit, remained in the suburbs of Rome; others, in Italy; but Epictetus fled to Epirus, and Dion Chrysostom took refuge among the Getae, where he lived by the work of his hands, clad as a slave, digging the ground and carrying wood and water to the camp of the legions of Moesia. Of all that belonged to him he had saved and carried with him nothing but a copy of Plato's *Phaedo* and one of the orations of Demosthenes. According to Philostratus, Apollonius, on the contrary, returned to Rome in the midst of this storm, where he abused his credit with many persons of importance to form a conspiracy. Nerva is said to have shared in this plot, but to have received no severer punishment than an exile to Tarentum, the astrologers having predicted his approaching death. Another plot, that of Juventius Celsus, brought other punishments; and persecution, gradually extending, spread from the aristocracy to the common people. Thus went on widening the sanguinary and gloomy circle wherein Domitian struck his blows from day to day.

The instrument of all these executions, which were inevitably followed by confiscations, was the Senate, held, as it were, besieged by the Emperor's soldiers. But this was a precaution which the timidity of these noble persons rendered quite needless. Where one among them, like the younger Pliny, ventured gently to face the agents of tyranny, there were many who made themselves denouncers, judges, and even executioners. Tacitus cries out in horror: "We have covered ourselves with the innocent blood of Senecio, and our own hands have dragged Helvidius to prison."²

¹ *Expulsis insuper sapientiae professoribus atque omni bona arte in exsilium acta, ne quid usquam honestum occurreret.* In these last words we see the habitual method of Tacitus, vague declamation being substituted for reasons, which may have been good or bad ones, but were at least serious; the motive in this case being the desire too often felt by governments to rid themselves of an opposition which hampers them. Eusebius places in 89 an edict of banishment against philosophers and mathematicians. Dion (lxvii. 13) speaks of them only in the year 93-94; and the word *αἵθρῳ*, which he employs, may merely refer to the edicts of Nero and Vespasian.

² *Agric.* 2.

When the latter was accused, one of the judges in the open Senate had laid hands upon him, and with the aid of some colleagues had dragged him out of the curia; and this encroachment upon the lictors' duty had given the senator the consulship. "We have exhibited to the world a memorable example of patience," Tacitus says again: "our fathers saw the last excesses of liberty; we, of servitude. The practice of informing being destructive to all society, men feared to speak or to listen; and we should be without memory, as we are without speech, could we have imposed upon ourselves forgetfulness as well as silence."¹

The tyrant was perhaps the most unfortunate of all; and it was right that he should be so. Domitian lived in a state of constant alarm; every sound terrified him, every man seemed to him an assassin,

A FISHERMAN.²

every occurrence an omen of evil. He would walk nowhere save under a portico whose polished walls served as a mirror in which he could see what went on behind him. He questioned his prisoners alone, but holding in his hand the end of the chain which bound them. He, once so fond of games and spectacles, now forgot his terrors for a moment only in gloomy amusements and cruel buffooneries. On one occasion he invites to the palace the most eminent senators and knights. They are shown into a hall hung with black; by the light of funeral lamps they distinguish biers, and at the head of each a low column, as at a sepulchre,

¹ *Ibid.* 45.

² Bronze found at Pompeii on the bank of a pond (Museum of Naples).

whereon each reads his name. When they have placed themselves on these couches, a train of unclad youths enter, representing spectres. They execute a mysterious dance; then seat themselves in the attitude of the Genius of Death, one at each man's bier, and a funeral repast is served, amidst profound silence, only broken by the Emperor, who recounts stories of murders and massacres to his guests. The latter feel that their last hour has come. But the fearful entertainment is over at last, the doors are opened, and they are at liberty to depart; each man, however, is accompanied by a slave. On reaching home, a messenger from the Emperor comes to them. They believe it to be the lictor with a sentence of death. But Domitian merely sends to each man his funeral column, which is of silver, and the dishes used in the repast, of great value and exquisite workmanship; and lastly, the funeral Genius himself, who is only a handsome young slave.¹

Another scene is more famous,—that of Domitian causing to be discussed by the Senate the question what sauce was most suited to a turbot. The story is true, *res vera agitur*, says Juvenal; but our view of it must be different from that which the satirist takes. A fisherman has the luck to find in his net a turbot of extraordinary size. In the hope of getting a good price for it, he carries it to the Emperor at his villa. At the same moment eight or ten senators arrive at the imperial residence, coming out from Rome, as was the custom daily, to pay their respects to Domitian. The Emperor exhibits the great fish to his guests, and each one has a word to say about it. The same thing has happened a thousand times on a return from hunting or fishing. But the poet has transformed this social scene into a grave deliberation, where the cynicism of senatorial servility is paraded: he had the right to do this, since eighteen centuries have taken his word for the story; but a little less art and a little more good sense reduce “his biting hyperbole” to its just proportions.

Meanwhile, even in these terrible years we find the tyrant occupied with works of public utility. In Spain he completes a highway which his father had begun; in Italy, he repairs the Latin Road, and opens another between Sinuessa and Puteoli,

¹ Dion, lxvii.

notwithstanding great difficulties. By the condemnation of Baebius Massa, whom the inhabitants of Baetica accuse, he guarantees to the provincials their protection against rapacity; and his appointment of Pliny to the praetorship, about this time, shows that there was still place for honest men in his government.

Ecclesiastical writers place a persecution of the Christians in the last months of this reign. No trace of it is found in pagan authors, and the facts which we know can be explained without the necessity of supposing any general measure, at that time not likely. In the reign of Domitian public anxiety had not been awakened in respect to the new religious society, and it was rather despised than feared, so far as it was known at all. We have seen that under Nero the punishment of the Christians was merely a measure of unjust and cruel local police. Six years later the Romans burned the city of David and the temple; but this was an act of destruction imposed by the necessities of war. Accordingly, after the victory of Titus, the legal toleration was continued which the Senate and, later, the Emperors, had granted to the Mosaic faith; and Vespasian confirmed it, subject to the regular tax of the didrachma for the Jews and for "all those who, without making public confession of this faith, lived after the Jewish manner."¹ The Christians, to whom this clause especially applied, profited by this toleration. The Jewish communities scattered throughout the Empire had always maintained relations with one another, both for the sake of sending the temple money to Jerusalem, and of assisting each other in their business journeys and their obligatory pilgrimages to the Holy Land. They thus formed a sort of immense semi-secret society; and in every place a word or a sign was enough to make the stranger known to his brethren, and in case of need secure him assistance. The Christians carefully preserved these habits, thanks to which Saint Paul was able to go over so many countries, in every city aided by the disciples whom he found there, or whom he converted from the Jewish or Gentile community. In the end the imperial government became

¹ . . . *qui vel improfessi judaïcam viverent vitam* (Suet., *Dom.* 12). Dion says to the same effect: ἐς τὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἔθῃ ἐξοκέλλουσι (lxvii. 14). Cf. Derenbourg, *Hist. de la Palestine*, p. 331. In pagan eyes Christianity was never anything more than a Jewish sect denying the God of its fathers. Galerius says the same in his edict of 311 (Lact., *De Morte persec.* 36.)

anxious on the subject of the numerous conversions made at Rome, and resolved to put a stop to them.

A senatus-consultum, issued in the reign of Tiberius,¹ had permitted Claudius to put to death a Roman senator affiliated into the Druidic sect,—that is to say, guilty of deserting the national religion; a fragment of one promulgated under Vespasian remains to us by which Judaism was limited to the Jewish nation.² In virtue of this law the Roman citizen who had submitted to the Jewish rite of circumcision, or had caused his slaves to undergo it, was condemned to perpetual exile, with loss of all his property; and whoso performed the rite was punished with death. Similar penalties were denounced in cases where Jewish masters caused their Gentile slaves to be circumcised. Thus the imperial government had the wisdom, which our own time has with difficulty regained, never to undertake a religious persecution in the design of compelling the Jews or the Gauls to abandon their hereditary faith; but it believed itself justified in hindering its own people from going over to a foreign religion, which, to the Roman mind, meant the same as abandoning one's native country. It prohibited the Jews, under pain of death, from proselytizing, as, not long ago, the Czar of Russia forbade his subjects to travel in foreign lands, or as Sweden forbade Protestants to embrace the Roman Catholic religion, or as Spain forbade its Roman Catholic subjects to read a Protestant bible.

Thus Rome stands, defending herself, but making no attack; leaving to each race its own faith, on condition that hers in turn be respected. With the new spirit of proselytism which, since the earthly country was lost, had animated the synagogue no less than it did the church, the Jewish colony at Rome had reconstructed itself and had been increased by enfranchisements, which were numerous since the war. Intelligent, active, and insinuating, the Jews had taken up or had created industries which the idleness of the Roman populace left free to them; and both orthodox and

¹ Vol. IV. p. 451.

² Paulus, *Sent.* v. 22, sections 3 and 4. We have not the date of this law *De seditiosis*; it probably belongs to the time when Vespasian, after the destruction of Jerusalem, regulated the condition of the Jews and subjected them to the tax of the didrachma. It was not until after this period that the new crime of *Judaizing* appears. Similar prohibitions were made later by Hadrian, Antoninus, and Septimius Severus (*Digest*, xlviii. 8, 11).

dissident had made their way into many households. Jews of all the different sects, with their Greek and Roman proselytes, were therefore becoming numerous in the city. But those who, like Tacitus, ought to have seen clearly, since to them was given the right of judging, were quite careless about distinguishing Jews from Christians, considering only that the latter were given over "to contrary superstitions, though of kindred origin." The government understood the subject no better, and was but little concerned with it, caring only that all, whether Jews by birth or by religion, should pay the capitation tax of two drachmas. A passage of Suetonius, quoted above, shows how rigorously this tribute was levied. The Emperors had no other feelings than contempt towards what Tacitus and Suetonius call a "shameful superstition;" and so long as public order was not disturbed, permitted the believers in it to preach among themselves and even to make converts, unless when, as in the case of Nero, they had need of obscure victims to tranquillize a popular excitement, or, as in the case of Domitian, of illustrious criminals to suffer for real or supposed conspiracies. During fourteen years Domitian asked nothing more of Jews or Christians than the payment of the particular tax laid upon their race; but eight months before his death, at the period of his greatest terrors, he bethought himself that imperial policy had united to the crime of treason a new offence,—to wit, that of Druidizing or of Judaizing. The censor, the pontifex maximus, who in this reign had put to death four vestals, appeared to be fulfilling his duty of zealous defender of the national religion when he prosecuted senators who, abandoning the faith of their fathers, no longer paid homage to the protecting divinities of the Empire. This was the accusation under which perished, at the expiration of his term of office as consul, Flavius Clemens, Vespasian's nephew through his father Sabinus, a man who had defended the Capitol against the partisans of Vitellius; nephew, moreover, to Domitian himself, through the Emperor's wife Domitilla, and the father of sons whom the Emperor had selected as heirs to the imperial dignity. Men at this time were extremely weary of the tyrant; a low, incessant murmur of hopes and of threats surrounded him; conspiracy was in the air. Possibly Clemens or friends of his may have used imprudent language; of

this we have no knowledge; but being accused of impiety,¹ he perished by the sword; his wife, who was probably a Christian, was banished to the Island of Pandataria. Near Rome, upon the Via Ardeatina, is to be seen a tomb adorned with Christian symbols and bearing his name; his children's fate is not known. Acilius Glabrio, former colleague of Trajan in the consular office, seems to have been the victim of two contradictory accusations, — the one, of becoming a Jew; the other, of having fought in the arena and killed an enormous lion. Many persons, under the same pretext, were despoiled of their goods.² Authentic proofs of a general edict of persecution in the reign of Domitian are not found, any more than of a similar edict in the time of Nero. But, as we have already said, the proconsuls had no need of any such authorization, being sufficiently armed against religious innovations and illegal associations; and we are thus at liberty to admit that there were acts of violence done by them³ of which the report did not

¹ Suetonius says (*Dom.* 15) that this Clemens, a man of notorious incapacity, *contemptissimae inertiae*, perished upon the most frivolous charges, *ex tenuissima suspicione*. He was put to death as an atheist, Dion Cassius says (*lxvii.* 13), — an accusation convenient to serve the anger of Domitian, but one which, while indicating clearly that the confidence of Clemens in the gods of the Capitol was shaken, gives us no light upon his new faith. It is not easy to believe that he was a declared Christian. He was killed at the expiration of his term of office, *tantum non in ipso ejus consulatu interemit*. Now consuls had to offer sacrifices and fulfil religious functions, which Clemens could certainly not have declined without public scandal of apostasy, which would have caused his death during his consulship. According to the Chevalier Rossi (*Roma sotterranea*, i. 265–267, 319–321, and *Bull. di Arch. Christ.* May and June, 1865), Clemens was a Christian. In respect to Flavia Domitilla, the virgin martyr mentioned in the *Acts* of Nereus and Achilleus, I share the negative opinion of Aubé, *Hist. des persécutions*, pp. 427 seq. It is possible that at the close of the first century Christianity had made here and there a conquest in the high society of Rome; but I cannot believe that so many of the Flavian house had been won over so few years after Saint Paul had said: “Not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called” (1 *Corinth.* i. 26); and it was especially among the lower classes that the new religion was received. More than a century after Domitian, Tertullian (*Ad Uxor.* ii. 8) wrote: “There are few rich men among us;” and Minucius Felix (*Octav.* 36): *Plerique pauperes dicimur*. Later still Saint Jerome says: *Ecclesia de vili plebecula congregata est*. See Leblant, *Rev. arch.* of 1880, p. 323. This point is of great importance; for there is a school which, in contradiction to the opinion of the early Fathers, seeks to explain, by secret infiltrations of Christianity into heathen thought, the admirable moral outburst in philosophy and in law during the first and second centuries of the Christian era. We shall later show that Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius, Paulus, Ulpian, and Papinian, are Romans, and nothing else. The writings of the former group and the commentaries of the latter are the logical development of ideas that preceded them, and the necessary result of historic circumstances, among which, in the first and second centuries, Christianity cannot be included, not having at that time any influence whatever upon heathen thought.

² Dion, *lxvii.* 14.

³ In an apology for Christianity presented to Hadrian in the year 126 by Quadratus,

reach Rome, Roman citizens alone having the right to stay the hand of the governors and arrest their *jus necis*¹ by an appeal to the Emperor. But these acts certainly were not numerous, and Tertullian reduces the persecutions to a few sentences of exile which were soon repealed.² According to the official documents which have come down to us, Trajan was the first to legalize the condemnation of the Christians.

Meanwhile, say subsequent authors, all nature foreboded the tyrant's approaching end. Lightning tore off the inscription from his triumphal statue and struck the temple of the Flavians. A tree with which the Emperor's destiny was in some way connected fell to the ground with a great noise. The Sortes of Praeneste made alarming responses and spoke of blood. A soothsayer in the army of Germany predicted a revolution for the 14th before the Calends of October, and Domitian himself announced that on that day the moon would be the color of blood. It is singular to remark the connection of frivolous causes and terrible events. Let the public mind become excited, and immediately credulity and alarm multiply omens of evil. These omens, in turn,

SYMBOLIC VINE.³

bishop of Athens, and Aristides, it is said: . . . ὅτι δὴ τινες πονηροὶ ἄνδρες τοὺς ἡμετέρους ἐνοχλεῖν ἐπειρώντο (Euseb., *Eccles. Hist.* iv. 3).

¹ Dion, liii. 14.

² *Tentaverat et Domitianus, portio Neronis de crudelitate; sed qua et homo, facile coeptum repressit, restitutis etiam quos relegaverat* (Apol. 5). If Tertullian had believed that the highest person in the state after the Emperor, a nephew of Domitian and a consul, had been put to death for the Christian faith, he would not have used language like this. Eusebius (*H. E.* iii. 18) does not know about the martyrdom of Clemens, although he mentions the banishment of Domitilla. However, the crime of "Judaizing" must date from Domitian's reign, for the *cognitiones de Christianis* mentioned by Pliny in his letter to Trajan can only refer to prosecutions under that Emperor.

■ Painted upon a vault in the tomb of Domitilla. Vines loaded with clusters of grapes represent the Church, "the Lord's vine." It was a symbol much employed by the early Christians.

appearing to reveal the future, excite to action those who hesitate, and who are helped to decide by the conviction that Heaven is their accomplice. The day so much dreaded by Domitian was looked forward to by conspirators in the palace and at the very door of the Emperor's apartment.

"The tyrant," says Juvenal, "who had with impunity robbed the state of so many illustrious citizens, whom no man ventured to avenge, perished when he caused alarm to the cobbler. Upon this shoal was shipwrecked the monster dripping with the blood of the Lamias."¹ A servant of Domatilla, who had lately been proscribed, undertook to kill the Emperor. To turn away suspicion, Stephanus² feigned to have a wound in the left hand, and wore a bandage about it for several days. The moment having come, he concealed a dagger in the wrappings, and sought an audience of the Emperor to reveal to him a conspiracy. While Domitian was reading the letter which contained details, Stephanus plunged a dagger into his abdomen. The Emperor, but slightly wounded, struggled with Stephanus; but some of the imperial attendants, rushing in, despatched their master, who received seven dagger-thrusts.

"The young slave who had charge of the altar of the Lares in the imperial bedroom happened to be there at the moment when the murder was committed. From him we have the story of the scene. On receiving the first wound, Domitian had called out to him to bring the dagger hidden under his pillow and to summon the guards; but the blade of the weapon had been removed, and all the doors were locked. Domitian, however, though wounded in the hands, had thrown Stephanus upon the ground, and was striving to tear his weapon from him, or to put out his eyes, when the other assassins, coming in, completed the murder. The Emperor was in the forty-fifth year of his age and the fifteenth of his reign. His body, wrapped in a common shroud, was removed during the night by the persons who had charge of burying the lower classes. But Phyllis, his nurse, recovering the corpse, paid it the last honors in Domitian's villa on the Via Latina, and secretly carried the ashes to the Flavian temple" (18th September, 96 A. D.). His statues and trophies were thrown down; his name

¹ *Postquam cerdonibus esse timendus coepērat* (*Sat. iv. ad finem*).

² *Suet., Dom. 17.*

was effaced on the public buildings;¹ and the Senate did not send him to join the Flavian deities already in the skies.

In forming a judgment of Domitian, as in the case of Tiberius, if we take our position in Rome among the nobles, we must call him, in his later years, an execrable tyrant; but if we look only at the Empire, he may pass for a firm and vigilant ruler. Like the Roman god Janus, these Emperors have a double face, and we must consider them in both aspects. It has been usual to show but one; that one we do not conceal, but we desire to exhibit the other also. The Prince of the Senate remains, with his informers and his executioners, his hands red with blood; but there is also the Emperor with the traditions of that peace and order which Augustus inaugurated, and Tiberius, Claudius, and Vespasian continued. Domitian remained true to these traditions; but as administrator and as ruler he was far behind the gloomy and formidable grandeur of the second Augustus.

¹ Upon the copper table which bears, in five columns, the three hundred and fifty lines of the *lex Malacitana*, or at least on what remains of it, and was engraved under Domitian, that Emperor's name has been scratched out, as also upon many others. *In plerisque Domitiani titulis*, says Orelli, *ad No. 767, ejus nomen erasum est*; it was, however, retained upon the table of Salpensa. A few statues escaped also. The extent of the Empire, the indifference of the remote towns in respect to the tragedies which went on at Rome, a grateful recollection of some particular favor, prevented the universal and invariable execution of the decrees proscribing the name and images of Emperors declared to be tyrants. The Empress Domitia seems to have survived her husband many years; for an inscription of the year 140 shows one of her freedmen who, after building a temple to her, offers the decuriones of Gabii fifteen thousand sesterces, of which the income is to be employed in keeping the little building in repair and in celebrating the birthday of his mistress (Orelli, No. 775). In the time of the Thirty Tyrants a general in the service of Aureolus claimed to descend from Domitian, whose name he bore (Trebellius Pollio, *The Thirty Tyrants*, vol. ii.).

² IMP. CAES. DOMIT. AVG. GERM. COS. XVII. CENS. PERP. P., around the laurelled head of the Emperor Domitian.



LARGE BRONZE OF DOMITIAN.²

TENTH PERIOD.

THE ANTONINES (96-180 A. D.).¹

THE ROMAN PEACE.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

NERVA AND TRAJAN (96-117 A. D.).

I. — NERVA (19TH SEPTEMBER, 96, TO 28TH JANUARY, 98).²

THE eighty-two years which lie between the accession of Tiberius and that of Nerva are divided among ten Emperors. Of these, five were supplied by the law of hereditary succession, and five by the soldiers' election: to the former belong Caligula and Nero; to the latter, Claudius and Vitellius; and by their results we may judge the two systems.

In reality they were only superficially different. Whether Otho bought the Empire from the praetorians, or Domitian inherited it from his brother, was of little consequence. The Emperor, however created, was sole master, in a country which nevertheless had not suppressed all traces of its free institutions, and in a time when men yet remembered the Senate, the people, the comitia, with their annual and responsible magistrates. Thus the form of

¹ To the Antonine family we add the Italian Nerva, who adopted Trajan, and we exclude from it Commodus, who was unworthy of his race.

² For the history of Nerva and Trajan we have not even Suetonius, who ends with Domitian's reign, and our principal source is Dion Cassius, or rather his abbreviator, Xiphilinus. We have unfortunately lost the work of a much esteemed writer, Marius Maximus, who composed a Life of Trajan, for the *Script. Hist. Aug.* quotes him twenty-eight times. He seems to have designed to continue the *Biographies* of Suetonius, as Amm. Marcellinus proposed to continue the *Histories* of Tacitus.

authority was contrary to manners and traditions, — two great forces which cannot be disregarded ; but it appeared to be in accordance with another great force which it was essential to consider, namely, the interests of the people ; for in every direction prevailed a vast necessity for peace and public order.

The Roman world, therefore, was occupied with two very different questions, — one, the political question, which was agitated in the city, and, unfortunately, also in the camps, most frequently amid bloodshed and violence, that of the accession, maintenance, or dethronement of the master ; the other, the economic question, which was the only one in which the provincials interested themselves, the preservation of peace without acts of extortion or violence, the security of the highways, and the activity of commerce without insupportably heavy taxes.

Augustus and Vespasian had satisfied this twofold need. During their reigns Rome had been tranquil, the law of treason had been forgotten, the lictor had been without occupation ; in the army there had been discipline, in the provinces prosperity, in the state the exterior forms of liberty. But all these advantages resulted from the wisdom of the two men, and not from institutions, and ended with their lives.

With Nerva an entirely different period begins. Five Emperors are to reign with honor for eighty-five years, and not one of them will fall by the assassin's dagger. Is it to be inferred that at last those institutions are to be established which we indicated, in Chapter LXXI., as the means of harmonizing that unity of command indispensable to the Empire with the regular participation of the provinces in the government of the state, which alone could prevent the violent shocks of revolutions ? Or rather is it only that, by virtue of a first fortunate selection, an unexpected succession of superior men is to take place ? Commodus and Caracalla, it is true, will re-enact Nero and Domitian, as though the Antonines had not for nearly a hundred years held the world in their hands. The Emperors of that family were, however, the last who could have saved the Empire, harmonizing its present and its past, its needs and its institutions. But while their intentions were honest, and they had a conviction of their duty as chiefs of the state, we find in them, no more than in their predecessors, any real political

wisdom, for they accelerated that movement of concentration which was to end in destroying all municipal liberties, and, under the best forms, perpetuated that power, unlimited as well as irresponsible, which was to destroy the Empire and bury the civilization of the world under its ruins.

At the same time we shall have occasion to recognize in the Antonines a general plan of conduct, Trajan being its most complete expression. Enlightened by so many disasters, the Antonines will show the greatest consideration for the new aristocracy formed by Vespasian, whose members at this moment fill all the high



PUBLIC LIBERTY.²

offices of the state. Without really restoring their power to the nobles, these Emperors will seem to govern with and for them.¹ They will make new patricians, for the purpose of keeping the ranks full; and in order to have done with the republican Brutus, Marcus Aurelius, instead of proscribing his memory, will extol the nephew of Cato as the most perfect model of Roman virtue. To the modest ambition of

the men of that time, this will suffice; the aristocracy, which had been in a state of permanent conspiracy against the Caesars, and even against the Flavians, will seldom form plots, and of these not one will succeed; and the Senate, believing itself to have finally recovered its right of appointing the chief magistrate, will strike coins bearing the legend, *Libertas restituta*, and Pliny will celebrate "the restoration of liberty."³

The plot to which Domitian had fallen a victim had numerous ramifications. This appeared as soon as the blow had been struck; all preparations had been made. The Conscript Fathers at once proclaimed Marcus Cocceius Nerva, an old man who had himself received the honors of the triumph, and in whose family the consular office had been repeatedly held.⁴

¹ The younger Pliny bitterly reproaches Domitian with his neglect of the Senate: *De ampliando numero gladiatorum aut de instituendo collegio fabrorum consulebatur* (*Paneg.*, 54); and *cum senatus aut ad otium summum aut ad summum nefas vocaretur* (*Epist.* viii. 14).

² *Libertate ab imp. Nerva . . . restituta*, Wilmanns, 64; LIBERTAS PVBBLICA SC. Liberty standing, holding a cap and sceptre. Large bronze.

³ Pliny, *Epist.* ix. 13.

⁴ A Nerva had been consul in the time of the triumvirs, and another in 22 A. D., and the

The choice was a singular one. A man of integrity, of good education, of gentle manners, Nerva, notwithstanding his two consulships, had signalized himself neither by great talents nor by eminent services, and there seemed nothing which could have drawn upon him this preference except his sixty-five years,¹ his bad digestion, and his feeble health, which gave ambitious men time to make ready their schemes, secure that they should not have to wait too long for their fulfilment.

The praetorians murmured, not being sure how this revolution, in which they had had no share, might result, and especially since it had overthrown an Emperor to whom they owed a large increase of pay. Nerva went out to the camp, and the promise of a *donativum* pacified them. In the case of the legions on the frontiers, who were entirely indifferent as to the choice of a master, but very responsive to the ruler's liberality, there seems to have been no difficulty whatever, their fidelity being

in no way tempted.² In the Senate a demand was made that all exiles should be allowed to return, and their property, where it was possible, restored to them. This was readily granted; and

new Emperor had been twice consul,—an honor which one only of his colleagues then living, L. Verginius Rufus, shared with him; but the latter had already refused the imperial power.

¹ Dion says sixty-five; Aurelius Victor sixty-one; Eusebius, Eutropius, and Cassiodorus, seventy-one.

² The story of Dion Chrysostom, of a sedition among the legions of the Danube, is worthy of no credit.

³ Vatican, Braccio Nuovo, No. 20.



NERVA WEARING THE CONSULAR TOGA.³

further, the chastisement of informers was called for, a violent reaction setting in against them.¹ Many were put to death; among others the philosopher Sura. These were insignificant persons; but others more formidable were in the Senate. We have a letter, in which Pliny relates how he attacked a consul-elect, the man who had laid hands upon Helvidius to pluck him from the curia and throw him to the lictors. The timid and gentle Nerva moderated this reaction, contenting himself with the removal of the guilty person from the consular office, and the Emperor swore publicly that so long as he should live, no senator should be punished with death,—an oath which was repeated by all the Antonines in turn. He prohibited accusations of treason and of Judaizing,² and threatened with severe punishment all informers who should not succeed in proving the charges which they alleged.³ Despotism relaxes social ties, violating, in its own interests, the discipline of orders and families; Nerva, to restore this discipline, punished with death the slaves who, in Domitian's time, had betrayed their masters, and freedmen who had betrayed their patrons, and he renewed the prohibition in respect to their testimony against those to whom they owed respectful fidelity or obedience.

These edicts did not, however, reassure the father of Atticus Herodes, who found a rich treasure in an old house in Athens. Alarmed by his dread of informers, he hastened to reveal to the Emperor what he had found, and to ask what he should do with this gold. "Use it," Nerva replied; but Atticus, who could not believe in the straightforward meaning of words so contrary to imperial usage, again wrote, saying it was too much for him. "Very well, waste it, then," was the response. The good-natured Emperor, who in his own elevation recognized a stroke of fortune, respected in the case of others the decrees of that goddess who had been so favorable to himself.⁴

¹ Pliny, *Epist.* ix. 13.

² Dion, lxxviii. 1.

³ It must not be forgotten that, in the absence of any public prosecutor, the informer was a social necessity, securing the execution of the laws by accusing those who violated them. The political informer is the person who merits all the odium which is attached to this name. The other informers were recompensed by the law, and were respectable citizens (*Dig.* xlviii. 2, 4).

⁴ Later, Hadrian established a rule on the subject of treasure-trove, securing half of it to the owner of the property where the treasure was found, and if the proprietor himself found it, he was to receive the whole (*Spart., Hadr.* 17).



NERVA (STATUE FOUND AT ROME. MUSEUM OF THE VATICAN, ROTUNDA, NO. 548).

Domitian had so exhausted the public treasury that Nerva at first suspended the games and the distributions; but the measure proving a dangerous one, before the end of the year he re-established the *frumentationes*.¹ He allowed the return of the buffoons, while diminishing the expense of the games, and he made an attempt to render the combats of the amphitheatre less sanguinary.² The founding of colonies for the poorer classes of citizens was a relief for some forms of destitution;³ and an idea, at once charitable and political, is revealed in an institution of the year 97, which Trajan and his successors developed; namely, public assistance granted to the children of indigent families.⁵ One of his coins shows him



COIN COMMEMORATIVE OF
NERVA'S FRUMENTA-
TIONES.⁴



COIN COMMEMORATIVE
OF A REFORM
IN THE POSTAL SERVICE.⁷

seated in the curule chair and holding out his hand as if in charity to a boy and girl, near whom stands their mother, with this legend: *Tutela Italiae*.⁶ Another commemorates his removal from the Italian cities of their obligation to meet the expenses of the imperial post.

Dion (lxviii. 2) well understood the policy of the Emperor, and what he says is notable: "Nerva did nothing without the participation of the nobles." Was this, as has been believed, a new form of government? Rather, it was the tradition of Augustus which these rulers sought to take up, and there was really no change in the general condition of the Empire.

¹ Eckhel, *Doctr. num.* vi. 407: *Plebei urbanae frumento constituto*.

² Augustus had already forbidden gladiatorial exhibitions in which the death of one combatant was required.

³ It is doubtless to this that Dion refers (lxviii. 2): "Nerva gave to the poor citizens of Rome lands to the value of 15,000,000 drachmas, intrusting to the senators the acquisition and distribution of these estates."

⁴ PLEBEI VRBANAEE FRUMENTO CONSTITVTO S. C. Modius, with six ears of corn and a poppy. Great bronze.

⁵ *Puellas puerosque natos parentibus egentibus sumptu publico per Italiae oppida ali jussit* (Aurel. Victor, *Epit.* 12). Henzen (*Tabula alimentaria*, p. 11) relates that Nerva also established a fund to be employed for the funeral expenses of the poor.

⁶ Eckhel, *loc. cit.*

⁷ *Vehiculazione Italiae remissa*. Two mules feeding. Large bronze.

One Crassus, who asserted himself to be a descendant of the triumvir, conspired, nevertheless, against this ruler, who sought only to be the chief senator, and rather the father than the master of the Empire. Nerva was satisfied to exile him to Tarentum. A praetorian prefect incited the soldiery to demand the death of Domitian's murderers. Nerva, extremely alarmed, trembled, and

dared not act. He implored pardon for those whom the praetorians condemned, offered himself in their place as a victim, but was unable to save them, and, the murder being committed, he then excused the soldiery, imputing the act of violence to an excess of respect for the military oath taken to the son of Vespasian. He even went so far as to humiliate himself before the people by publicly thanking the praetorians for having punished the most wicked of men.

This act of insubordination was of bad omen ; Nerva evidently had not a hand strong enough to govern. History is too apt to ask of a ruler and



BUST OF NERVA.¹

to admire in him that feeble kindness which yields to every supplication. May it not be possible that with Titus and Nerva it was the same as in the regency of Anne of Austria in France? At that period every man sought his own advantage and acted in accordance with his own wishes ; one word was in all men's

¹ Marble bust found in Rome, near Trajan's Forum (Campana Museum, H. d'Escamps, *op. cit.* No. 83).

mouths, — “The Queen is so good!” Let us beware of over-praising some of those so-called “good Emperors,” facile towards all men and in all matters, or of over-blaming those whom history calls “bad,” who, like the hated Mazarin, required order and obedience without intrigues or plots. Mauricus, who had been banished in the reign of Domitian, was one evening at supper with Nerva, and Veiento, who had been an informer in the late reign, was also present. The conversation fell on Catullus, then dead, one of the most odious of the informers in Domitian’s time. “If he were yet alive,” Nerva said, “what would this Catullus be doing now?” “He would be supping with us,” Mauricus rejoined.¹ The consul Fronto also said in the Emperor’s very presence: “It is a great misfortune to live under a rule where all things are forbidden, but it is not less so to live under one where all things are allowed;”³ and Pliny adds: “The Empire is coming down upon the Emperor’s head.”⁴ These men were right; the authority which vacillates and hesitates in using its legitimate rights lets everything grow weak and fall. Government, whatever its name and form, must have for its device: *Sub lege imperium*. The law commands, *imperat*, and the power charged with executing the law must also command with steady determination; otherwise men lose their respect for the law, and with that all is lost.



NERVA AND THE
ELDER TRAJAN.²

In truth, Nerva did but one thing, and it is that which makes his fame, — he adopted Trajan. The insubordination of the praetorians, together with some disturbances on the Rhine and the Danube, decided him in October, 97, to take a colleague; and upon the recommendation of Licinius Sura⁵ he selected the ablest of his generals, “for the purpose of restoring discipline and giving to the state a ruler whom no force could cause to yield.”⁶ News

¹ Pliny, *Epist.* iv. 22.

² Reverse of a gold coin of Trajan, bearing the heads of his father and his adoptive father.

■ Dion, lxviii. 1.

⁴ . . . *Concussa respublica, ruensque imperium super imperatorem* . . . (*Paneg.* 6).

⁵ . . . *Surae cujus studio imperium arripuerat* (*Aur. Victor, Epit.* 13). Accordingly, Trajan loaded him with honors, and in a sense made him his colleague. Three months after this, Nerva died.

■ *Principem qui cogi non posset* (Pliny, *Paneg.* 6).

of victories arrived from Pannonia.¹ Nerva made solemn offerings in the Capitol, and taking gods and men to witness, adopted Trajan as his son.²

II. — TRAJAN (98–117); THE DACIAN WAR.

SPAIN had already sent to Rome a whole colony of literary and scientific men, of poets and philosophers;³ she was now about to furnish the state with its first provincial Emperor.⁴ Trajan (M. Ulpius Trajanus) was born, September 18th, 52 A. D., at Italica, on the Baetis, one of the earliest transmarine colonies of Rome, founded by Scipio Africanus during the Second Punic War. He had made his first campaigns under his father, a meritorious officer who had obtained all the military and civil honors, — the consulship, the government of Syria, the *triumphalia ornamenta*, and lastly, in 79, the proconsular office in the province of Asia. Trajan himself served ten years as military tribune in Syria and upon the Rhine, was praetor about the year 85, had command of a legion in Spain, was consul in 91, and after this, governor of Upper Germany; he was brave, skilful, and popular with the army, notwithstanding his firmness, for the reason that his discipline, though severe, was always just. In camp he lived with great simplicity, sharing in the soldiers' hardships and taking part in all their exercises; on a campaign he gave up his horses to be used for transport and marched with the troops, bearing the same fatigues, and was ever the last man to come under shelter. Finally, he had

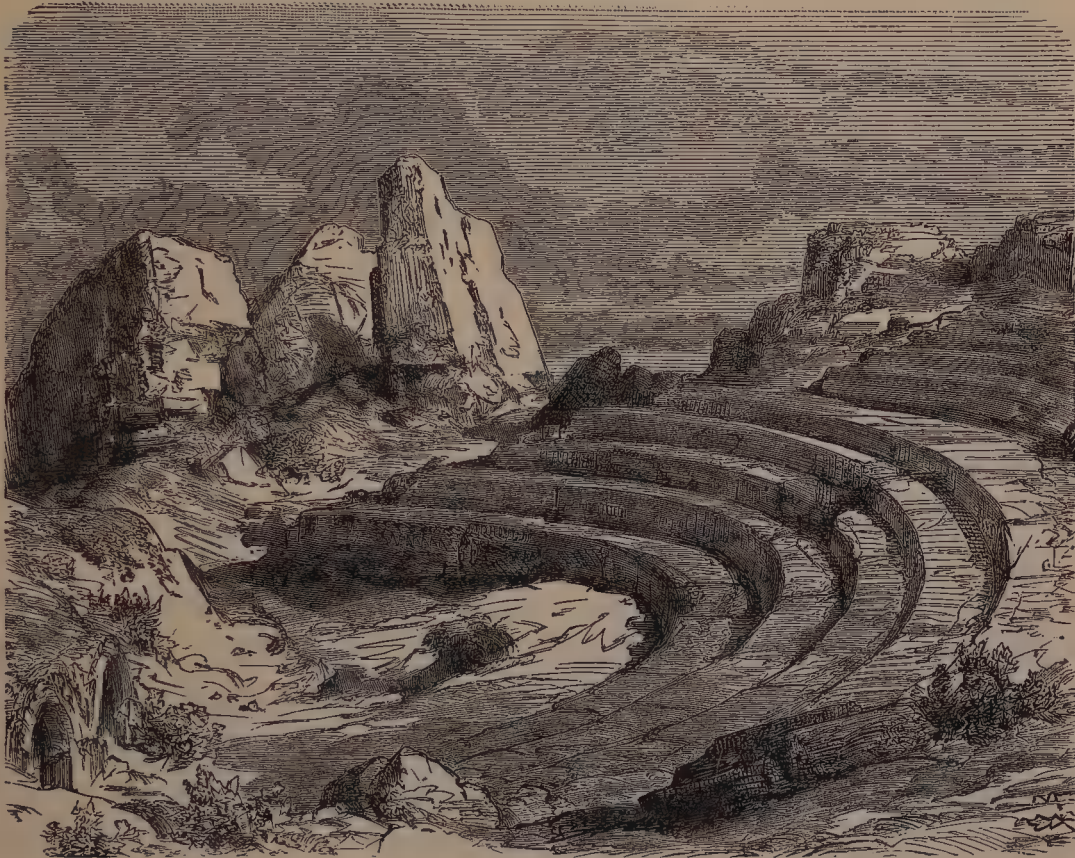
¹ These were successes gained over the Suevi, upon which Nerva assumed the surname of Germanicus, transmitting it to Trajan on the latter's adoption.

² 28th January, 98 A. D. He had reigned six months and nine days. There was an irregularity in this adoption; namely, the absence of the person adopted, whose consent was necessary. We may observe that the first year of Trajan's *tribunica potestas* dates from the 27th of October, 97, the day of his adoption, and the second begins January 1st, 98. The usage of dating the second tribuneship from the first new year's day following the accession of the Emperor was observed by his successors, — a detail of importance in establishing the imperial chronology.

■ See Vol. IV. pp. 602–603. Herennius Senecio, the friend of Pliny and one of Domitian's victims, was born at Baetica; Licinius Sura also was of Spanish birth.

⁴ Dion says (Ixviii. 4) that Nerva adopted Trajan, although the latter was a Spaniard: ἐπειδὴ μηδεὶς πρόσθεν ἀλλοεθνῆς τὸ τῶν Ῥωμαίων κράτος ἐσχέκει. Italica was situated on the right bank of the Guadalquivir, at Santiponce, six miles from Seville (C. I. L. ii. 145).

that faculty of great generals, so fascinating to the soldier, of being able to call by name his officers to the very humblest, and all who had been wounded or had received decorations. Accordingly, on news of his elevation all the armies sent to congratulate him, — a compliment whose sincerity cannot in this case be doubted, for this unexpected choice was both an honor to themselves and a hope to all military leaders.



RUINS AT ITALICA.

Three months later, Trajan received at Cologne the Senate's envoys, who brought him news of the Emperor's death. He replied in a letter at once modest and dignified, in which he renewed the pledge given by Nerva that he would never subject a senator to the capital penalty,¹ — a singular promise, but explicable by the history of preceding reigns; furthermore indicating that, like the late Emperor, Trajan would transfer the government from the palace to the curia. He was at this time forty-six years of age.

¹ ὥς οὐδένα ἄνδρα ἀγαθὸν ἀποσφάξοι ἢ ἀτιμάσοι (Dion, lxxviii. 5).

As a proof of his confidence in the Senate, he left that assembly and the consuls in charge of the government while he himself remained upon the Rhine, occupied in completing the great works begun by Domitian. It would seem that, already seized with the desire to restore the splendor of the Roman arms, and seeing nothing important to do upon this frontier, he conceived the idea of establishing there an impregnable line of defence, so that he might not fear a diversion from this quarter while occupied elsewhere.¹ We have no details as regards these works; but we are assured that Trajan had made good use of the three years spent by him in that country as governor, and that he employed still more profitably a fourth year, that in which he was adopted, and that it was his successors' task rather to maintain than to continue the vast intrenchments in the *agri decumates*. Behind



TRAJAN.

this line of defence he had established numerous military posts to augment its strength,² — on the north to replace the ruined camp, Vetera Castra, on the left bank of the river, Colonia Trajana (Kelln or Cleves), the garrison of which commanded the Lower Rhine; on the south he founded Aquae (Baden-Baden), within reach of the defiles of the Black Forest; in the centre, at Mayence, facing the great entrance way from Gaul into Germany, he threw a permanent bridge over the Rhine, and connected it by a good road, nearly a mile in length, with a fortress constructed near Hochst, at the junction of the Mein and the Nidda, — which fortress Julian was so fortunate as to find available three hundred years later for purposes of defence against the Alemanni.³ Possibly we ought to place at this period the expedition of Vestritius Spurinna, legate in Lower Germany, who peacefully established a king of the Bructeri in his possessions.⁴ Tacitus, with his customary exaggeration, has represented this people as

¹ The *Germania* of Tacitus, written in the year 98, shows that the Roman people were much interested at that time in those nations, and that their strength and character were well understood. The elder Pliny had already written a work in twenty books on the history of the Germanic wars.

² *Urbes trans Rhenum in Germania reparavit* (Eutropius, viii. 2). See above, pp. 704 seq.

³ *Munimentum Trajani*, ten miles from Mayence (Amm. Marcellinus, xvii. 1). In respect to the bridge, it is probable that remains of piles still existing were the work of Charlemagne rather than of Trajan. Cf. the *Trajan* of Dierauer, p. 32, No. 1, in the *Untersuchungen* of Budinger, 1868.

⁴ Pliny, *Epist.* ii. 17.

annihilated.¹ After their defeat, the Chamavi and Angrivarii having established themselves in great force in the territory of the Bructeri, the Romans considered them dangerous neighbors,

TRAJAN.²

and aided the latter in reconstituting their national existence under a native king, relying upon their feebleness to retain them in a state of dependence. Thus upon the Lower Rhine peace was secured, and the influence of Rome reached as far as the Weser.³

¹ *Penitus excisis*. Possibly the two events related, one by Tacitus, the defeat of the Bructeri, the other by Pliny, the restoration of their king, may have been contemporaneous.

² Bust of the Vatican, Braccio Nuovo, No. 48.

³ The fortifications established by Domitian and Trajan upon this frontier made it possible to diminish the force which guarded it. Augustus had had eight legions there (Tac., *Ann.* iv. 5); in the second century there were but four (Borghesi, iv. 217 and 265).

From the banks of the Rhine Trajan had announced to all the Empire by an act of firmness the commencement of a strong administration. Nerva had sent him his ring and this line of Homer, —

Τίσειαν Δαναοὶ ἐμὰ δάκρυα σοῖσι βέλεσσιν.¹

“May thy arrows, O Apollo, cause the Danai to expiate my tears.” These Danai of the feeble old man were the authors of the late sedition. Trajan sent for them, degraded some, banished others, and punished the rest with death. All men perceived that henceforth obedience was necessary; but it soon became evident that it was obedience to law, and not to the single will of a cruel or capricious master.

To remain so long upon the frontier was a manifestation of great indifference in respect to the pomps of Rome. But in a



PLOTINA AVGV. IMP.
TRAIANI
(LARGE BRONZE).

military monarchy, this conduct was extremely politic, and it completed Trajan's conquest of the soldiers' good will. When he finally set out for the capital, in the latter half of the year 99, the soldiers who composed his escort gave no cause for complaints along the route; it was like the modest suite of a general. This moderation was in good taste and of good omen; when, however, he caused to be set

up two lists, one detailing his own expenses in this journey, the other giving those of Domitian in a similar case, he seems ungenerous towards a dead Emperor, who, by the bestowal of honors and military commands, had prepared the way for his present fortune.² At Rome for his arrival there was no pomp or show, but only an immense concourse of people, contemplating with delighted surprise this Emperor who made his first entry into his capital on foot, this veteran of the camps who was affable towards citizens, this valiant captain, of lofty stature and martial air, who testified respect

¹ *Iliad*, i. 42.

■ I should not criticise this act of self-laudation, which was, after all, legitimate, had not Trajan thereby given the tone to the court society, showing that he did not design to protect the memory of Domitian. In an hereditary monarchy, the son upon the throne is the natural defender of his father's memory. In the Roman Empire it happened rarely that he who inherited the crown had any interest in protecting his predecessor against partisan calumny or even the customary court scandals.

for civil merit and for age. The Empress Plotina, a woman of austere virtues,¹ of whom the Greeks, quite inappropriately, made a new Venus,² was unwilling to have the state of courts continued about her. As she ascended the steps of the palace she turned to the multitude to say: "Such as I am entering here, I desire to be when I leave here;" and she kept her word. Nerva had inscribed over the imperial residence, "Public Palace;" and, as in the time of Augustus, all the citizens were admitted to it. Trajan did the same; besides, an old custom required that the door of the pontifex maximus should never be closed. He gave orders to have the jewels and objects of value which decorated the palace carried into the temples, which at that time served as museums. "Whatever was brilliant in the dwelling of the Emperor," says Martial,³

BUST OF PLOTINA.⁴

"has been given to the gods; every one will behold it." Trajan was blamed for diminishing the respect due to princes by permitting too great familiarity. His answer was, "I shall be towards others as I should have wished, when I was a mere private citizen, that emperors should be towards me." In the prayer annually addressed to the gods that his reign might be prolonged, he caused this clause

¹ *Plotina, incredible dictu est, quanto auxerit gloriam Trajani* (Aur. Victor, *Epit.* xiv.). Cf. Pliny, *Panegy.* 83, and *Epist.* ix. 28.

² Ἀφροδίτη θεὰ νεωτέρα (*Bull. de corr. hell.* vi. 398).

³ *Epigr.* xii. 15.

⁴ Found on Mount Coelius (Vatican Museum).

to be inserted: "So long as he shall deserve it;" and in the public acts he placed his own name after that of the Senate and the people.¹ Following the example of Augustus, he visited his old friends familiarly, attended their family festivals, and joined in their pleasures, supping, walking out, or joining in the chase with them. On one occasion an attempt was made to awaken his suspicions against a senator. He went, without a guard, and dined



REMAINS OF THE PUBLIC PALACE.

with him; and the next day said to the accusers: "If he had wished to kill me, he would have done so yesterday."

The Caesars and the Flavii, the head of the second family excepted, were all men of letters, orators or poets, more or less successful, — at least all had attempted to write. Trajan, who made his first campaign at fourteen, had been able to escape from the baleful education of the period, from those rhetoricians who corrupted the taste of their pupils, and sometimes their good sense.

¹ Pliny, *Panegy.* 67 and 72.

He had that experience of affairs and of life which is so needful to train men of command; and as he had also a straightforward mind and an honest heart, he did not manifest any base jealousy against those who possessed the gifts which nature or circumstances had denied him.¹ In the deference shown by this valiant general to the Senate there was of course a political purpose; there may also be seen in it, as it appears to me, the involuntary homage of the rough soldier to the charm of patrician elegance.

This conduct of an Emperor who seemed "to harmonize two things hitherto irreconcilable,—liberty and the imperial power,"² won for him the good will of the Fathers as much as did his oath, renewed at Rome, to put no one of them to death.

As guaranty of this promise, he had the corrupt informers who still survived, seized and delivered over to insult and mockery in the amphitheatre, after which he banished them. Several measures of public utility which we shall mention later, an ardent zeal for the welfare of the people, and respect for the old families,⁴ favors which he granted



SENATORIAL COIN.³

to the young nobility,⁵ and especially the custom he assumed and maintained of letting the Senate talk much⁶ and even act a little, assured to him the affection of this body, which, near the end of his reign, testified its gratitude by decreeing to him the title of *Optimus*, which had hitherto been bestowed only upon Jupiter.

¹ Παιδείας μὲν ἀκριβοῦς, ὅση ἐν λόγοις, οὐ μετέσχε (Dion, lxviii. 7.) *Quamvis ipse parcae esset scientiae, moderateque eloquens* (Aur. Victor, *Epit.* xiii.).

² *Res olim dissociabiles miscuerat, principatum et libertatem* (Tac., *Agric.* 3). The words of Tacitus were applied to Nerva, but are more applicable to Trajan.

³ The title of *optimus princeps* is seen on the coins from the year 106, but only in 116 the word *Optimus* as a surname. The coin given represents the Column of Trajan, and has for its legend: S. P. Q. R. OPTIMO PRINCIPI; great bronze.

⁴ He made a reissue of coins (Dion, lxviii. 15), but at the same time preserving many of ancient type to flatter the pride of the old houses. Among the medals recast at that time we have those of forty-three families of the epoch of the Republic; it was as if the aristocracy of ancient Rome were again brought to light (cf. Borghesi, *Œuvres compl.* i. 215). Eckhel thinks that he also had all the consular denarii recast, *per renovare la memoria dell' antiche famiglie romane*, says L. Pizzamiglia (*Storia della mon. rom.* 1867, p. 203). There was also in this reissue a consideration of economy, the new pieces having more alloy than the old. The alloy, which from Nero to Nerva had been, for silver denarii, from 5 to 10 per cent, was increased to 20 per cent. Cf. Mommsen, *Gesch. des röm. Münzwesens*, pp. 754-758.

⁵ *Festinatīs honoribus* . . . (Pliny, *Panegy.* 69).

⁶ Pliny speaks of discourses of five, and even of seven, hours' length which he pronounced there, and of three entire days occupied with a single suit.

As to the people, satisfied with the *congiarium* allowed them and with the martial air of their new master, they were delighted with this novelty of a citizen Emperor who went on foot through the streets amid the crowd, or sometimes in a litter with his friends, and not always in the first place. Besides, behind Trajan they saw the devoted legions; these, indeed, not displeased at feeling that a firm hand guided them, had accepted without a murmur at the hands of the new Emperor one half of the ordinary *donativum*; and from this general, now in the prime of life, they anticipated campaigns, victories, and spoils.

"In fact," exclaims Pliny, "instead of being eclipsed by the Emperor, the nobility gains new lustre from him. Caesar neither fears nor alarms the descendants of the heroes, these last sons of liberty. If there is anywhere a remnant of an ancient lineage, a fragment of an old illustrious family, he seeks it out and infuses new life into it; it is an additional force which he gives to the Republic. Great names are held in honor."¹ Notice here that harmony between the Emperor and the nobles, established by Augustus, lost under his successors, restored by Vespasian, and now, to the advantage of the Empire, re-established by the Antonines, and destined to endure for nearly a century.

Trajan made a sojourn of less than two years at Rome before setting out for the Dacian war. Without being so disgraceful as Dion asserts, the expeditions of Domitian had been inglorious and unprofitable. Generals had been defeated and killed, and an eagle taken. The Dacians had, it is true, lost the last battle, given up their prisoners, and sent an embassy to Rome to make peace. The Empire might therefore on the Danube, as many times on the Rhine, have profited by its last success to abandon an embarrassing war which led to adventures and not to security; but Trajan was not the man to be content with this reserved attitude. Bred in camps, he had their customs; he was fond of military exercises, the chase, wine, boon companions.² Especially he loved

¹ *Panegy.* 69.

² . . . *Περὶ μεράκια καὶ περὶ οἶνον ἐσπουδάκει* (Dion, lxviii. 7). Aurel. Victor assures us that he was obliged to give orders that the commands which he gave after his protracted banquets should not be put into execution. Yet we have seen above that he had, in case of need, the sobriety of a true soldier. There is still visible, on the Arch of Constantine at Rome, a wild-boar hunt by Trajan (Rossini, *Gli Archi trionfali*, tav. 69).



REEFS OF THE DANUBE.

war, even with its hardest privations; he carried it on successfully, and consequently was always eager for it. He did not ask whether the policy of Augustus for the frontiers was the best; whether a strong defensive position behind two great rivers, resting upon camps, a numerous army, and populous cities, with intrigues and bribes thrown across into the hostile nations of the opposite shores, might not be better than the vast scheme of penetrating to the Indies and returning to Italy through the midst of subjugated Barbarians. This soldier grew tired of Rome.¹ While the Senate was wearying him with its adulations and Pliny by his verbose elegance,² he was thinking of Caesar and Alexander, and seeking a pretext for war; and as it was an easy thing to find, he caused his orators to say that the disgrace inflicted upon the Empire under Domitian, on the borders of the Danube, ought to be wiped out.³

We may conclude, from some words of Pliny, that during the winter of the first year of his reign, which he passed away from Rome,⁴ Trajan had visited the legions of Pannonia and Moesia to respond to their felicitations, to inspect this frontier and the river-camps of the Danube, to obtain a clear idea of the power of the peoples on its opposite bank, and perhaps to begin the great works which were executed in that quarter during his reign. Under Domitian and under Nerva there had been much disturbance there.⁵ There had been disastrous engagements and doubtful victories. Since the Rhine and the Upper Danube had been pacified, Trajan felt that his present duty was to pacify the Lower Danube also. It was with good reason that he turned his arms

¹ Out of twenty years of reigning he passed eight or nine away from Rome.

² Every phrase of the *Panegyric* is carefully wrought out, and may be taken, apart from the bad taste of some of it, for what constitutes Latin elegance; but there are few literary works so tedious as this long, cold amplification. Trajan was perhaps condemned to read it; happily he did not understand it. Pliny developed into a volume the senatorial harangue which he addressed to the Emperor on accepting the consulship in the autumn of the year 100, — that is to say, at a time when Trajan had as yet done nothing. In seeing what eulogiums an exceedingly honest man like Pliny can lavish upon a monarch so soon after his accession, we can comprehend what others did; and it becomes evident that only a very strong head could have resisted the intoxication which these flatterers poured forth.

³ Dion well says: τοῖς τε χρήμασιν, ἃ κατ' ἔτος ἐλάμβανον βαρυνόμενος (lxviii. 6); but we have seen (pp. 195–197) to what it was necessary to reduce this tribute.

⁴ *Panegyric*. 12 and 16; or at least before the autumn of the year 100, the time of the compilation of the *Panegyric*.

⁵ See, on this point, pp. 189–190.

in this direction, for there the greatest dangers of the future were to be, and there invasions were to commence.

The lower valley of the Danube is inclosed between two parallel chains of mountains, — the Balkans and the Carpathians; but while the former fall away to the Black Sea, the latter, between Cronstadt and Fokchany, turn abruptly towards the west, forming the great bend in which modern Transylvania is included, and then descend again southward to the Danube, which they overlook with their rugged heights for an extent of more than thirty leagues. Opposite these mountain groups, which separate the plain of the Banat (valley of the Temes) from the immense Wallachian plain, the Balkans send out on the right bank mighty undulations of land which rise on the bank of the river to the height of two or three thousand feet, and in their lower strata cross the bed of the Danube, filling it with dangerous reefs. This is the celebrated pass called the Iron Gate, which begins at Drenkova and terminates near Orsova. The majestic river, confined in this narrow gorge, which at Cazan measures less than six hundred and fifty feet in width, rushes angrily along, white with foam. A violent wind raises waves there which no other river knows, and in the shallow waters it requires the most skilful pilot and the firmest hand at the wheel to keep in the channels formed by the ledges at the bottom.¹ Nature is there magnificent, imposing, and bold. Man was also great there; for this river Trajan spanned by a bridge which the moderns have not yet dared to reconstruct,² and in this mountain, which on the left bank descends perpendicularly to the angry water, he hewed out a road which his soldiers could follow at all times. There are still to be read, cut in the rock, these words of an inscription: "He opened a way across the vanquished river and mountain."³

¹ At Drenkova a special pilot comes on board with three or four men to hold the wheel. I must say, however, that no peril attends this passage. I have made it; and while I found much to admire, there was really nothing to fear. We in France are acquainted only with the valley of the Rhine; with the exception of the Falls of Schaffhausen, that of the Danube is far superior to it in picturesque beauty and grandeur.

² The last bridge we meet in descending the Danube is that which was built between Buda and Pesth thirty or forty years ago.

³ . . . *Montis et fluvii anfractibus superatis, viam patefecit*; several words being partly effaced, Mommsen reads the last part of the inscription thus: *Montibus excisis, amnibus superatis, viam fecit* (*C. I. L.* vol. iii. No. 1,699). The road cut in the solid rock still exists. In descending the Danube we follow it for several miles. From the middle of the river it



TRAJAN'S ROAD AT ORSOVA.

The inscription is of the year 100. We may therefore infer that a part of the work was commenced before the first Dacian

appears like a line drawn on the side of the mountain; it is, in fact, but a groove, only five feet wide at the base, made a few feet above the deep waters. Its width was, however, doubled by a wooden platform which projected over the water. There are also to be seen, on the right bank of the Alouta, remains of a Roman road which the Wallachians call *Calea Trajanului*.

war. Aurelius Victor even attributes to Trajan the opening of a military road leading from the Euxine to Gaul. The Romans, those great builders, certainly did not wait for more than a century before they recognized the necessity of laying out a safe highway along the great river which protected their Empire for a distance of six hundred leagues; without doubt in this case, as in many others, the work really of several generations has been placed to the account of the one man who has left upon this frontier the most illustrious memory.¹

The importance of the military preparations corresponded to the greatness of the works undertaken to furnish to the army a solid base of operations. From Vienna, at the foot of the Kahlenberg, to Troësmis, in Dobrutcha, eight legions guarded the country of the Pannonians and Moesia. Five of these left their encampments and assembled, in the year 101, on the borders of the Save, which carried the heavy baggage down to the Danube, near Viminacium (Costolatz) in the region we have just described. There Trajan joined them with the ten praetorian cohorts and the Batavian and Moorish cavalry. It was not too great a force with which to encounter a brave people and a skilful chief, of whom history would have made a hero had it known him better.²



MARS GRADIVUS.⁴

The Dacians occupied the two sides of the huge promontory which the Carpathians project upon the Danube, — to the west, the valley of the Temes, or the Banat; on the east, the Wallachian plain. But the centre of their power, their capital and their fortresses, lay more to the north, in the upper valley of the Marosch (Transylvania).³ Thither an enemy must penetrate in order to strike decisive blows. The locality could be reached by three routes, — one to the west, through the Banat,

¹ Near the Servian village of Horum, opposite Kozlamare, in the province of Banat, one reads an inscription on a cliff of the right bank of the Danube, belonging to the year 33 or 34, and consequently to the reign of Tiberius, which proves that at this epoch two legions were occupied in constructing a military road along the river (Griselini, *Gesch. des Temesw. Banat*, i. 287, and *C. I. L.* vol. iii. No. 1,598).

² See pp. 195–196.

³ *Montibus suis inhaerent* (Florus, iv. 12).

⁴ Cohen, No. 135. According to the highly probable opinion of M. de Longpérier, the coins which bear on the reverse the image of Mars Gradivus marked the departure of a military expedition (*Rev. Num.* 1865, p. 402).

crossing by the pass, also called the Iron Gate, the secondary chain which separates the basins of the Temes and the Marosch; the others, to the east, through Little Wallachia, ascending the two valleys which lead to two gorges cleft in the principal chain, that of the Jiul (Schyl), ending at the pass of Volcan, and that of the Alouta, which, starting in Transylvania, traverses the great chain at the famous defile of the Red Tower (Rother Thurmpass), to the south of Hermannstadt. These routes both lead to the neighborhood of Sarmizegethusa (Varhely).

In the first war, Trajan followed, at least with his main army, the route of the Banat, which separated him least from his reserves in Pannonia; in the second, he seems to have preferred the other routes. In both cases he marched with one of his flanks covered by the mountains, and hence always near strong positions which he could hold against a sudden attack.

A bridge of boats, thrown across near the present hamlet of Grodichte, enabled him to debouch into the plains of the Temes. The army advanced straight forward by the route which is still laid out on Peutinger's map, crossed the Eiserne Thor (Iron Gate), and turning to the east, arrived before the principal stronghold of the Dacians, Sarmizegethusa (Varhely). This place was captured, with the spoils which several generations had collected there.



THE IRON GATE.¹

The Burri, a people who had settled in the upper valley of

¹ From the Column of Trajan (Fröhner, *La Col. Traj.* pl. 42, and Bartoli, *Col. Trajana*, Roma, 1672, pl. 35).

the Theiss, attempted to interpose in favor of the Dacians; their message was written in Latin characters on a huge mushroom, or rather on a buckler. Trajan paid no heed to a menace which came from a people of so little account; he drove the enemy beyond the Marosch, and crushed them in a great battle. The Dacians acknowledged their defeat; they gave up their arms, the deserters, the eagle captured from Fuscus, levelled their fortresses, and agreed to regard the friends of Rome as allies, and her adversaries as enemies. The Decebalus

COIN COMMEMORATIVE OF THE DESTRUCTION OF THE BRIDGE OF BOATS.¹



himself came forward and accepted these hard conditions. His capital received a Roman garrison, which was connected by a line of fortified posts with the camps on the Danube. The expedition had required two campaigns (101-102) and three battles, for Trajan was three times saluted imperator by his soldiers.

He re-entered Rome in triumph, with the surname of Dacicus, and paid for his welcome by two favors about equally agreeable to the people,—a *congiarium*, and the recall of the mimes, against whom he had at first revived the law of Domitian. But the festivities which followed the solemn entry were scarcely ended when ill news arrived from the Danube.³ The Dacians had recovered their courage. They were rebuilding their forts, collecting arms, forming alliances with all the enemies of Rome, and attacking, beyond the Temes, her allies the Iazyges. Trajan returned to the army in 105,⁴ resolved to have done with this people.

The principal attack took place on the east, by the valleys of the Jiul and the Alouta. To cross easily to this side, he ordered the completion, by his architect Apollodorus, of a bridge begun



THE BRIDGE OVER THE DANUBE.²

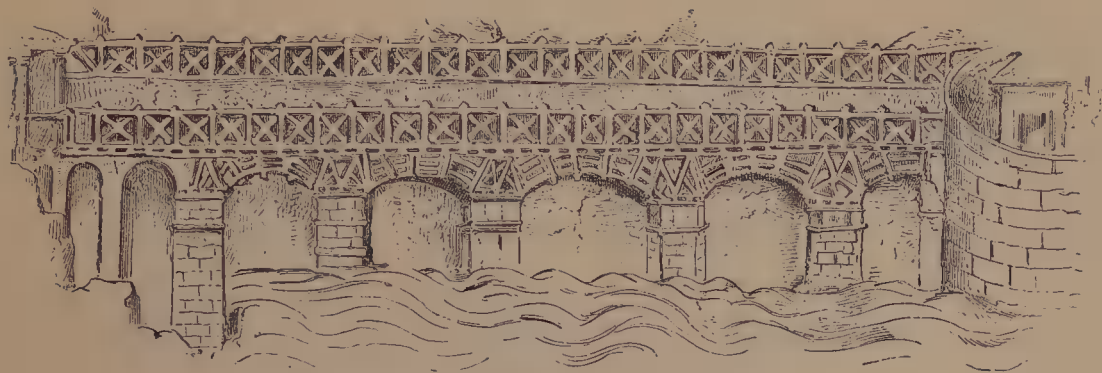
¹ DANVVIVS COS. V. PP. S. P. Q. R. OPTIMO PRINC. The Danube crowned with reeds, the right arm extended, the left arm resting on an urn. Silver coin.

² Great Bronze (Cohen, No. 419).

³ At those of the second Dacian triumph, in 106 or 107, he gave the people, during a hundred and twenty-three days, games in which ten thousand gladiators fought, and eleven thousand wild beasts were slain (Dion, lxxviii. 15).

⁴ M. des Vergers places the second declaration of war at the end of the year 104; Mommsen and Dierauer make the resumption of hostilities in 105.

at the time of the former war,¹ near Turn-Severin, the remains of which still exist at the bottom of the river, where have been



TRAJAN'S BRIDGE OVER THE DANUBE.²

seen at low water sixteen of the twenty stone piers which had sustained the wooden trusses.³ The work would be exceedingly difficult, even to-day; in the time of Trajan it was far more so,

¹ In our day the construction of a bridge across the Seine requires two seasons; it must have taken much longer for the bridge of Trajan. What are pointed out as the remains of Trajan's bridge at Gieli are the ruins of fortresses built in the Middle Ages.

² From the Column of Trajan.

³ In 1858 an Austrian commission made a careful study of these remains. The Roman army was employed in this work; great tiles bearing the names of cohorts have been dredged near the piers. "The ruins of Trajan's bridge still exist; and during low water the lower courses of the piers, now carried away, are quite visible about six miles below the last cataract of the Iron Gate, thirteen miles down the river from Orsova, and nearly opposite Tourno-Severino. In this part of its course, where the river is reduced to a single arm, stood a bridge of timber-work, whose semicircular trusses, composed of three courses of arches superposed, and fastened with cross-pieces, had about 120 feet span, and rested on two abutments and twenty piers of masonry, 177 feet distant from axis to axis, giving for the span of the bridge, piers and arches included, 3,720 feet. Forts guarded each entrance to the bridge. The place of crossing was wisely chosen, away from the cataracts, at a point where the current is tranquil, and where the extent of the plain allows the river to expand in breadth without deepening its channel too much. The greatest depth there is, at low water, only about twenty feet. The bottom is a gravelly sand, solid enough to bear the weight of masonry. The description which Dion Cassius has given of the work bears marks of evident exaggeration. The height of the piers, according to him, was 150 Roman feet, or 156½ feet English, for which there was no occasion; and the arches, of masonry, connected piers distant 170 feet from axis to axis, which would be, even in our day, a marvel of construction. The bas-reliefs of the Column of Trajan and several bronze medals struck in Trajan's reign give a complete denial to this description. The arches which are there represented are of timber-work, composed of a triple course of pieces of concentric curve, whose equidistance is preserved by braces converging towards the arch, — an ingenious plan often employed by the moderns, and of which the utility is manifested in the work of art which gives us its representation, some details excepted where the artist has probably altered the forms which the celebrated Apollodorus of Damascus, the architect of the Column, had given to the bridge of which he was the engineer" (Official Report of M. L. Lalanne, president of the European Technical Commission for the Construction of a Bridge over the Danube, December, 1879).

and our admiration is unbounded for the resources of the Empire which undertook it, and the genius of the architect who executed it. In this locality the distance between the banks is twelve hundred yards;¹ at low water a depth of twenty feet is still found in the channel, and twice as much in freshets, and the mean flow exceeds ninety-eight hundred yards per second. To build the Pyramids or the Colosseum was a less difficult undertaking.

Before the Roman army crossed the bridge, the Decebalus, feeling apprehensive, attempted to avert the tempest which threatened him by causing the Emperor to be assassinated. This design failing,



THE DANUBE AT THE BRIDGE OF TRAJAN.

he asked for peace and reimbursement of his war expenses, promising in exchange to give up Cassius, one of Trajan's best generals, who, invited to a conference, had been treacherously captured. To leave his Emperor entirely at liberty, Cassius took poison. The news of this noble act of devotion heightened the ardor of the Romans; the most difficult obstacles were surmounted, and the enemy, vanquished at every encounter, was dislodged from every stronghold. The Decebalus ended his career bravely; at the taking of his last fortress he threw himself upon his sword, and his chiefs put themselves to death after him (close of the year 106). He had buried his treasure in the bed of a river, the course of which

¹ 3,570 Grecian feet (Dion, lxxviii. 13). It appears that Apollodorus constructed an artificial island on a shallow in the middle of the river (Tzetzes, *Chiliades*, ii. v. 67 seq.).

MAP FOR TRAJAN'S CAMPAIGNS IN DACIA.

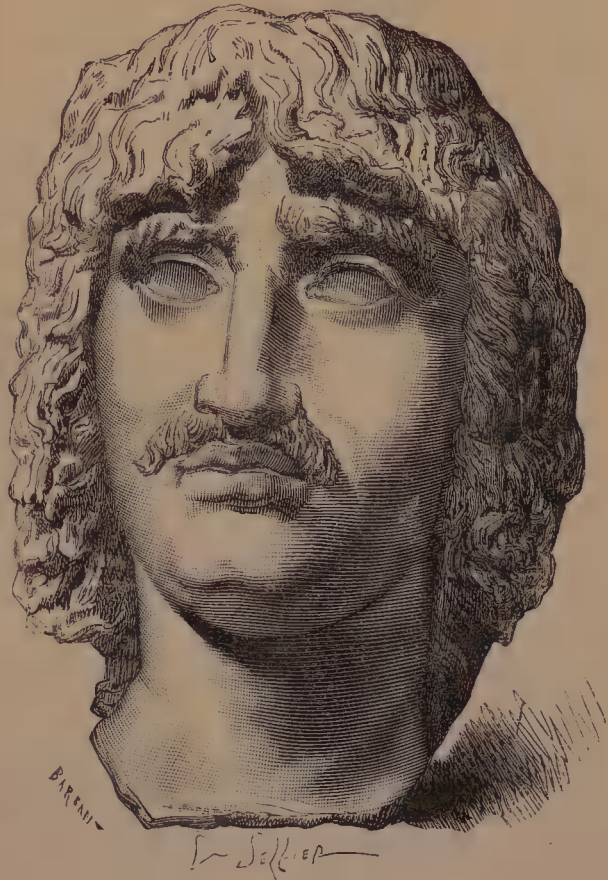
History of Rome



Edited by W. & A. Johnston, Edinburgh & London.

had been turned aside, and had put to death the captives who had been employed in the work;¹ but one of his confidential friends revealed the secret. Still another brave people, who, after a desperate resistance, disappeared from history! But the Dacian race is not extinct; its blood yet remains in the inhabitants of Roumania.

The conquest was completed. To render it durable, Trajan summoned into the region comprised between the Temes and the Alouta (the Banat, Transylvania, and Little Wallachia) settlers drawn from all the provinces of the Empire² and veterans from all the legions, and organized two powerful colonies, — Ulpia Trajana at Sarmizegetusa, in



THE DECEBALUS CONQUERED BY TRAJAN
(BRITISH MUSEUM).³

the centre of the country, the better to keep it under restraint, and Tsierna, in the vicinity of the great bridge, that his legions might always have free entry into the province. He founded two others on the right bank of the Danube, — Oescus (Gicen) and Ratiaria, near Brsa-Palanca; finally, he built, opposite the mouth of the Alouta, the city of Victory, Nicopolis, which is still so called.⁴

¹ The Goths did the same for the burial of Alaric.

² *Ex toto orbe Romano infinitas eo copias hominum transtulerat ad agros et urbes colendas* (Eutropius, viii. 3). The colonists of Latin origin must have been far the most numerous, for their language has remained in the country, and we read of *Augustales* there, who, with this exception, were only in the western provinces. But the inscriptions show Asiatics, Galatians, Carians, etc., at Napoca, Sarmizegetusa, etc. (cf. *C. I. L.* vol. iii. p. 160, Nos. 859, 860, 870, 882), and Dalmatians at Alburnus major (Verespatak), etc. These must have been veterans who were compelled to learn Latin in the service, without renouncing their religious beliefs.

³ *Description of the British Museum*, vol. iii. pl. 6.

⁴ *C. I. L.* vol. iii. Nos. 753, 1,641, and p. 141, and Amm. Marcellinus, xxvii. 4, 12.

To these names might be added, if their ruins had yielded them up to us, those of municipia, fortresses, and intrenched camps,¹ which were established in order to bring under cultivation this



DACIA, ROMAN
PROVINCE.²

fruitful soil, to work the mines in the Carpathians, and to secure at the same time the obedience of the subjects and their security. In the fertile valley of the Czerna, where Trajan certainly tarried when he came to look after the work on the bridge, are two springs, one sulphurous, the other ferruginous. The Romans very soon constructed at that place the Baths of Mehadia, which speedily became famous, and remain so to this day. These baths they consecrated to Hercules, because the waters restored strength; and there has been found there an inscription *Hygeiae et Veneri*, the two goddesses of whom, in all times, at watering-places, health and pleasure have been implored.

Between these towns the two legions left by Trajan in Dacia³ built roads measured to the line, like those of the rest of the Empire; and in the cities were erected altars, temples, and amphitheatres, of which some must date from the first days of the conquest, since at the end of scarcely half a century Antoninus was obliged to rebuild one which was falling into decay.⁴ Gold mines were found in the mountains of Transylvania, and Trajan organized the working of them by skilled miners summoned from Dalmatia,⁵ where these operations were habitually carried on;⁶ and

¹ See Francke, pp. 158-178, the province of Dacia in the *C. I. L.* iii. 161-261, and the *Carte de Peutinger*, édit. Desjardins. The municipalities of Dacia were afterwards raised to the rank of colonies,—Napoca (Kolosvar or Klausenburg), under Antoninus or Marcus Aurelius; Apulum (Karlsburg, in the upper valley of the Marosch), perhaps under Marcus Aurelius; Patavissensium vicus (Thorda), under Septimius Severus. In Transylvania alone remains of twenty-three camps have been found; Sarmizegetusa, Tsierna, Napoca, and Apulum had at that time or later the *jus Italicum*,—that is to say, exemption from taxes (*Digest*, l. 15, i. sections 8 and 9).

² Dacia, holding an ensign, and seated on a rock (the Carpathians). The bunch of grapes which one of the children holds is proof that Transylvania had vineyards before the conquest (Cohen, No. 332).

³ The *XIIIa Gemina* and the *Ia Adjutrix* (*C. I. L.* vol. iii. No. 1,628).

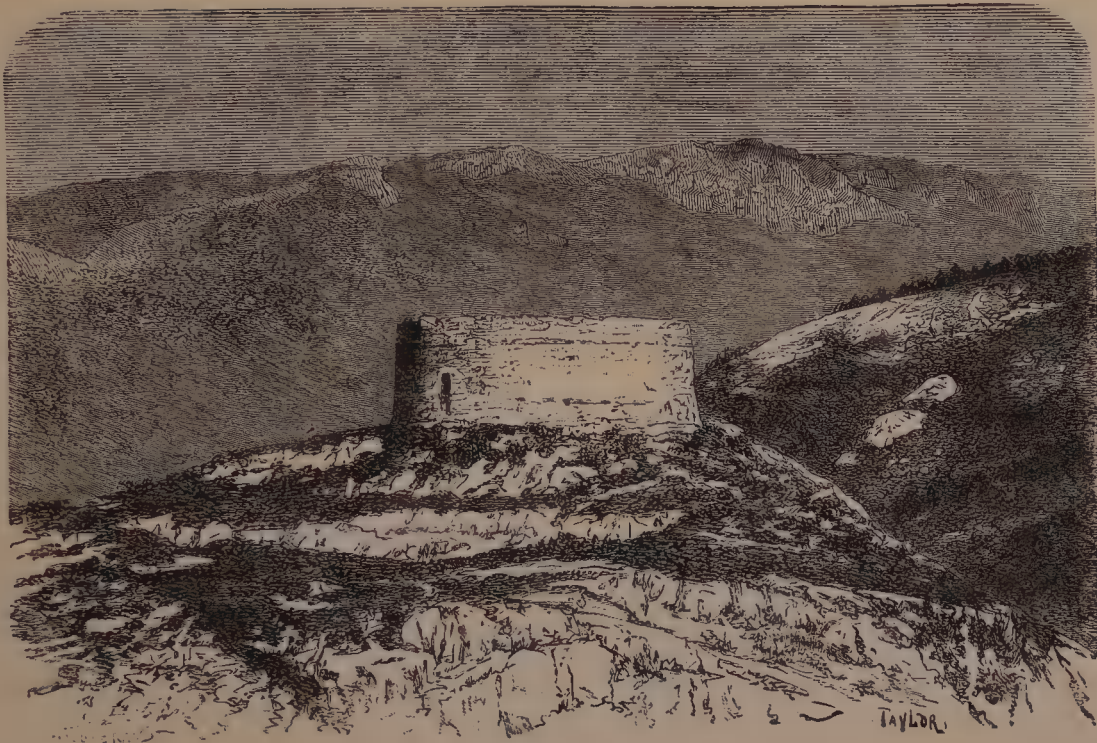
⁴ *Vetustate dilapsum*, at Porolissum (*C. I. L.* vol. iii. No. 836, in the year 157).

⁵ *C. I. L.* iii. 213-214; some inscriptions mention guilds of *auroriorum* and *salariorum*.

⁶ Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* xxxiii. 21) speaks of an auriferous vein discovered in Dalmatia in the time of Nero, which yielded fifty pounds of gold per day.

in many inscriptions left us by them we find mention of their customs or of their contracts.¹

A brisk traffic soon united this Barbarian land to the earlier provinces, and there were seen in it, as in the oldest cities of the Empire, guilds formed by mechanics, societies of foreign tradesmen established in Dacian towns, and even tombs of Palmyrenes² or Ituraeans. None of the Dacian inscriptions which furnish these



ROMAN TOWER IN TRANSYLVANIA.

details mention any of the former divinities of the country, but there is a great deal concerning Oriental gods, — Mithra, Isis, Serapis, the Jupiter of Tavium (Galatia), and of Heliopolis (Syria), the *Bonus Puer* (Phosphorus, or the Egyptian Horus), the Gallic Nehalennia, the Virgin of Carthage, and many others.³ The current of colonization determined by Trajan and his successors had been so strong that the indigenous population was submerged, and had no power to pierce through the new society which enveloped it

¹ Cf. *C. I. L.* iii. 921–966: *Instrumenta Dacica in tabulis ceratis conscripta*.

² There are also funeral inscriptions of natives of Palmyra in the oases of Algeria. Cf. L. Renier, *Inscr. d'Algérie*, Nos. 1,637, 1,639, etc.

³ *C. I. L. ibid.*, *passim*. At Aquincum, in Pannonia, an inscription has been found in honor of Baal (*Musée Épigr. de Pesth*, by M. E. Desjardins).



ROMAN MAUSOLEUM IN TRANSYLVANIA.

and compel the new-comers to accept some of its gods, as had happened in Gaul after Caesar's conquest.

It must then be recognized that the Romans, if we leave out of account the populace of Rome, the scum of the world, had in their decline retained some of their early virtues. In the second century of the Christian era it might have been supposed that this race of workers and of soldiers, who, wherever they established

themselves, took such strong hold that the traces of them yet remain, had been exhausted in colonizing Italy, Gaul, Spain, and Africa. But still the old stock shows its strength and its fecundity; the colonists of Trajan assimilated to themselves the original population still to be found in all the Wallachian villages, where it may be recognized by the lofty stature, fair complexion, blond hair, and by the calm and leisurely movements of the men of the North, while the descendants of the colonists have preserved the low stature, keen glance, black hair, and the vivacity of the men of the South. Under the Latin influence these elements, so diverse, blended into a harmonious whole. Dacia became a new Italy, Tzarea Roumanesca. In spite of the invasions it has suffered, it is still called Roumania; its people are Roman people; and from the banks of the Marosch to those of the Pruth, from the Danube to the summit of the Carpathians, they speak a Latin tongue.¹ Bearing in mind the short period which was required to bring about this transformation, one is led to consider this Latinization of Dacia as the greatest achievement in colonization of which history has any knowledge. What powerful vitality this race possessed, and what great things might have been done with peoples so malleable, had they been united by general institutions which would have given them a common life!

¹ A language, at least of which the foundation is Latin. Thus the Latin has given to the Roumanian only about twelve hundred simple words, against twenty-eight hundred Slavic; but the Latin words are generally the essential ones, and have more derivatives than the Slavic words (*Dict. d'étymol. daco-romane*, De Cihac, 1879).



THE COLUMN OF TRAJAN.

We have related nearly all that ancient writers report concerning this war; but one may learn far more from Trajan's Column, which is for the military life of the Romans what Pompeii is for their civil life,—the faithful representation of things which disappeared eighteen hundred years ago. The bas-reliefs which unroll in graceful spirals around its white marble shaft reveal to us the arms and costumes of the legionaries and the Barbarians, their military engines, their camps, the assaults of strongholds, the passages of



JUPITER HURLING THE THUNDERBOLT.¹

rivers, Trajan himself haranguing his troops or bandaging the wounded, and the King of the Dacians throwing himself upon his sword that he might not outlive his people.²

This monument of the military fame of Rome, more durable than its Empire, still stands in the midst of the ruins of the Forum which Trajan created by levelling a hill which sloped from the Quirinal towards the Capitol. According to an inscription engraved on the pedestal, it was necessary to remove a mass of earth, the height of which was equal to that of the Column, a hundred and twenty-eight feet.³ It is impossible to give a complete description

¹ Fröhner, pl. 15; Bartoli, pl. 17 and 18.

² M. Fröhner (*La Colonne Trajane*) has undertaken to reconstruct the history of the Dacian wars with the bas-reliefs of this monument. But though they are a precious mine for the archæologist, two elements indispensable to the historian are wanting,—the indications of time and place, which only an inscription could give. The bas-reliefs comprise over twenty-five hundred human figures besides animals and machines.

³ ... *Ad declarandum quantae altitudinis mons et locus tantis operibus sit egestus* (Orelli, 29).

CAVALRY DELIVERING THE TROOPS.¹

of this monument; but the nature of this work requires that we should at least reproduce its principal scenes.

The first combat is an infantry engagement at the passage of

WOUNDED BROUGHT IN.²

a river which the Dacians are defending; they are giving way, terrified by a storm, which is indicated by Jupiter casting his thunderbolt.

¹ Fröhner, pl. 27 and 28; Bartoli, pl. 17 and 18. ² Fröhner, pl. 31; Bartoli, pl. 28.

TRAJAN FORTIFIES HIS CAMPS.¹

The next bas-reliefs show the Emperor embarking to succor his troops, besieged in their camp, and bringing them deliverance. This time the cavalry has the honor of the victory, notwithstanding

TRAJAN BESTOWING LARGESSES.²

the assistance furnished to the Dacians by the Sarmatians, who are recognized by the absence of the buckler.

¹ Fröhner, pl. 29; Bartoli, pl. 29.

² Fröhner, pl. 35, 36, 37; Bartoli, pl. 32.

LUSIUS QUIETUS RECONNOITRING.¹

But the success is dearly bought, for many soldiers are brought into the field-hospital, where surgeons dress their wounds.

TRAJAN GIVES ORDERS TO BESIEGE SARMIZEGETUSA.²

Trajan advances cautiously, marking his route by camps which the legionaries construct, making them strong, like fortresses.

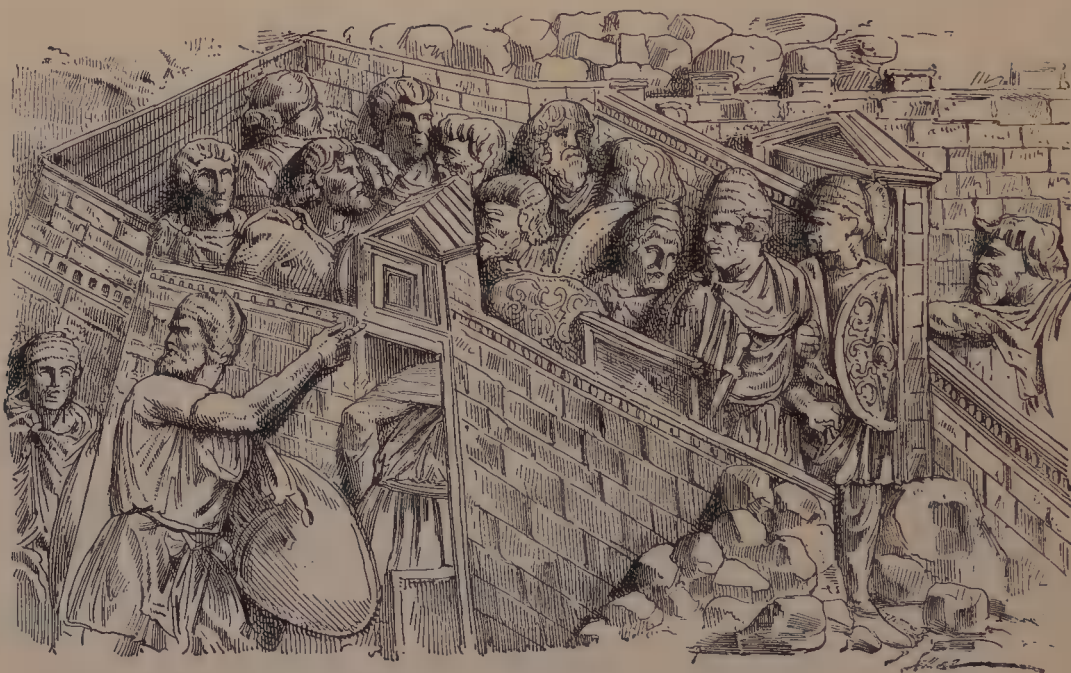
By his words and gifts he supports the soldiers' courage.

¹ Fröhner, pl. 50; Bartoli, pl. 47.

² Fröhner, pl. 56; Bartoli, pl. 50.

THE DECEBALUS MAKES HIS SUBMISSION.¹

A Moorish chief, Lusius Quietus, with his swift horsemen, whose small horses with bushy manes suggest those of Numidia,

TRAJAN COMES TO DELIVER THE CAMPS.²

pushes his reconnoissances into the forests surrounding the Dacian capital, Sarmizegetusa.

¹ Fröhner, pl. 51 ; Bartoli, pl. 54, 55.

² Fröhner, pl. 96 ; Bartoli, pl. 71.

BATTLE.¹

He opens the way for the Emperor, who besieges and reduces the city. The conquered Decebalus comes to tender his submission.

THE DECEBALUS SETS HIS CAPITAL ON FIRE.²

Trajan, upon quitting Dacia, leaves garrisons in fortified camps. On the breaking out of the second war these camps are besieged; he hastens to deliver them.

¹ Fröhner, pl. 94; Bartoli, pl. 89.

² Fröhner, pl. 97, 98; Bartoli, pl. 92, 93.

DACIAN CHIEFS MAKING THEIR SUBMISSION.¹

He encounters fierce resistance; a severe battle under the walls of the new Dacian capital gives it into his power.

SUICIDE OF THE DECEBALUS.²

But the Decebalus sets it on fire before surrendering it, while his principal chiefs, assembled at a banquet, drink of a poisoned cup

¹ Fröhner, pl. 100; Bartoli, pl. 95.

² Fröhner, pl. 116; Bartoli, pl. 108.

HEAD OF THE DECEBALUS BROUGHT TO TRAJAN.¹

to escape the disgrace of captivity. Others, less proud, come and make their submission to the Romans.

LAST COMBATS.²

The Decebalus, however, does not despair; he again tries the fortunes of battle. A last defeat decides him to take his own life.

¹ Fröhner, pl. 116; Bartoli, pl. 109.

² Fröhner, pl. 121; Bartoli, pl. 111.

His head, brought to Trajan, and afterwards sent to Rome, announces the close of the war.

He leaves behind him some brave comrades, who sell their lives dearly. They are only destroyed by burning the villages in which they have taken shelter.

The war had been waged on both sides without mercy. The report had been circulated in the legions that the Dacians delivered over the Roman captives to their women that they might put them to death by torture. Trajan's architect has also, upon the Column,



BURNING OF THE VILLAGES.¹

represented them in the act of slaying the prisoners. In rearing this monument, which has served as a model for all triumphal columns, the Greek Apollodorus renounced the genius of his race, which would have required idealized art; but he obeyed that genius of Rome which finds gratification in reality and utility. He has reproduced all the incidents of these two campaigns, — the field-works of the soldiers, their weapons, their costume, and that of their adversaries; we even see there the medical service of the legion in operation. Nor do we regret that he has done so, for in this severe marble epic we can read, not only the Dacian war, but all those which the Romans carried on beyond the Danube and the Rhine.

During the conquests of the Emperor in the North, one of his

¹ Fröhner, pl. 123; Bartoli, pl. 112.

lieutenants, Cornelius Palma, went forth by the eastern frontier beyond the ancient limits of the Empire. The great desert which stretches from the Euphrates to the Red Sea surrounds Syria and Palestine with its waves of sand and its nomad marauders. On the border of the cultivated lands, and almost under the same meridian, are found the great city of Damascus, which the Romans had for some time held in partial dependence, and the four towns of Bostra, Gerasa, Rabbath-Ammon (Philadelphia), and Petra; the latter in the open desert, equally distant from the Red Sea and from the Dead Sea, and on the route of the caravans which went from the valley of the Euphrates to that of the Nile. It was the residence of the Nabathæan king Zabel, whose authority extended as far as Damascus, and also the haunt of bandits who desolated the rich countries of the Jordan and harassed the caravans.



DACIAN WOMEN TORTURING ROMAN PRISONERS.¹

Cornelius Palma took possession of these places in the year 105,² reduced the country to a province (Arabia), and made of Bostra a colony, which served as quarters to the legion Third Cyrenaïca. Roads were at once laid out, and conduits of water provided to utilize the mountain torrents and give life



A CAMEL
ON A COIN
OF BOSTRA.



COIN OF ZABEL.³

¹ Fröhner, pl. 36; Bartoli, pl. 33.

² The era of the new province begins on the 22d of March, 106 (Waddington, *Mél. de num.*, 2e série, p. 162).

³ Heads of Zabel and his mother, Sequailat, placed one upon the other. On the reverse, their names and two cornucopias. Bronze coin.

to the arid plain. An inscription recently discovered is a complimentary address of the inhabitants of Kanata to the imperial legate, who, directly after the capture, had



ARABIA.²

led the water of a spring into their city.¹ With rulers of such foresight, the towns gained life, wealth, and a numerous population; Petra became the centre of an important commerce; and we find the nomads, seized with a taste for the arts, decorating their cities with monuments, whose ruins, in the midst of solitudes, astonish

and delight the traveller; while many, won by the attraction of the soldier's pay, entered the service of the Empire; and so the men who had been highway-robbers now undertook to be the guardians of the public peace.³

III. — ADMINISTRATION.

THESE conquests, the first especially, produced a great effect at Rome.⁴ Since the reign of Augustus the Empire had been augmented only by the conquest of Britain under Claudius; and that unlucky Emperor had won neither fame nor popularity by the success of his lieutenants. But the double expedition, led by Trajan himself, into an uncivilized country, the subjugation of a formidable people, the multitudes of colonists who were seen making their way from the remotest provinces toward these fruitful lands, and the Roman eagles soaring above the Carpathian Mountains, in the very midst of the barbaric world,—all this produced what is called “glory,”

¹ Ἐκ πρὸς τοῦς of Corn. Balbus (Waddington, *Inscr. de Syrie*, No. 2,296).

² ARAB. ADQ. S. P. Q. R. OPTIMO PRINCIPI. S. C. Arabia standing; at her feet an ostrich. Great bronze.

■ One inscription mentions a *cohors quinta Ulpia Petraeorum* (*Bull. de l'Inst. arch.* 1870, p. 22). In others is cited the *IIIa coh. Ituraeorum* (Wilmanns, 1,630, 1864).

⁴ We possess many coins with the legend, *Dacia captiva*, and the image of a woman with her hands bound behind her back, seated, or thrown down, upon shields (Cohen, ii. *Traj.* No. 74). One other (No. 332), later than the conquest, bears for legend, *Dacia Aug. prov. s. c.*, and shows Dacia seated upon a rock holding an ensign surmounted by an eagle; on the left, a child holding ears of corn; before her, another child holding a bunch of grapes. It is the medal of the colonization.



RUINS OF GERASA, FROM REY'S VOYAGE DANS LE HAOURAN.

and stirred men's imaginations. The Senate decreed to the generals triumphal statues, to the Emperor his Column, and the poets dreamed of epic songs in honor of the new Rome. "Where can you find," wrote Pliny to his friend Caninius, "a subject so fruitful, and although all truth, more like a fable? You will show us streams turned into arid plains,¹ bridges thrown across rivers which had never before known them, armies pitching their camps upon steep mountains, and a resolute king driven from his capital and deprived of life."³ But as the Latin spirit was already on the decline, in letters at least, it is in the metre and language of Homer that Caninius purposed to write his national poem; and Pliny, feeling the same solicitude as did Boileau, found only one objection to the design, —namely, the difficulty of introducing Barbaric names into Greek verse.

TRAJAN'S RETURN TO ROME.²

Nevertheless, when the conqueror of Dacia had returned again to the city, on the surface it appeared only that there was one senator more in Rome. This is the epigram of Martial. That licentious poet, who styled Domitian a god, does not even accord to Trajan the name of lord. "We no longer behold a master here," he cries, "but the most just of senators."⁴ The Emperor, in fact, discussed with his colleagues, legislated or determined cases with them;⁵ he suffered them to fulfil, with entire freedom, their harmless functions, and even to dispose as they saw fit of the magistracies, — those

¹ Allusion to some river which Trajan had turned from its course for a military operation.

² Bronze medallion, struck in 106, on the return from the campaign in Dacia. The Emperor, mounted, head bare, with cuirass and holding a spear, is preceded by Plenty, and followed by three soldiers.

³ *Epist.* viii. 4.

⁴ *Epigr.* x. 12.

⁵ For instance, in the case of Marius Priscus, proconsul of Africa, prosecuted for malversation, Pliny and Tacitus were directed by the Senate to conduct the accusation. The arguments lasted three days, and Trajan was present at all the sittings, which were protracted, as on one occasion Pliny spoke four hours. Priscus was condemned to banishment (December, 99, and January, 100). Pliny was also charged by the Senate to sustain the complaint brought by the whole province against Caecilius Classicus, proconsul of Baetica (101?). Under Domitian he had obtained the condemnation of another proconsul of this province, Baebius Massa (*Epist.* iii. 4 and 9). In 103 or 104 he defended Julius Bassus, proconsul of Bithynia.

gilded idols still held in great veneration, but from which political life had withdrawn.¹ To promote a greater number of senators to the consulship, Trajan appointed twelve consuls each year, and only five times during his reign assumed the fasces himself, submitting to all the customary formalities, even to the oath taken while standing before the consul in charge, who remained seated and dictated the words.

For the elections he established the secret ballot, which furnished a safeguard to the dignity of the senators, since the eye of the ruler could not note those who opposed his will. Pliny applauds this reform, and at the same time fears it, with good reason.² This mode of voting, good for the inferior class, whose freedom requires protection, is objectionable in the case of men of importance, since by this means they escape the responsibility of their vote. It is true that the great men of Rome were at that time very inferior persons. The first time that the senators made use of this new mode of voting, jests, and even improper language, were found upon several of the ballots; one of them bore the names of the supporters in place of the names of the candidates.³ At these unexpected revelations of the ballot-box, the Senate resounded with indignant outcries, and all the wrath of the Emperor was invoked upon the guilty. They remained unknown. These ill-timed jesters doubtless in public played their part with the greatest gravity, but meanwhile laughed under the mask at the comedy they were acting. Pliny is not one of these; a man so pre-occupied with public opinion maintained etiquette and ceremony even in his bed-chamber, where, that very evening, he related the scene to a friend, asking indignantly whether such persons were not capable of anything. Why then should his serenity be disturbed by discordant words? He conscientiously admires his Emperor, and with good reason; he even comes little short of believing himself back in the times of the Republic. "You have commanded us to be free," cries he, "and we shall be free."⁴ Men allowed themselves to be deceived by his words, and some

¹ Exception must, of course, be made in the case of the civil magistracies (*praetor urbanus, peregr., de fidei commissis*) and the administrative or military functions of the provincial governors and commanders of legions, which were necessarily very real.

² Pliny, *Epist.* iii. 20.

³ *Epist.* iv. 25.

⁴ *Panegy.* 56.

thought they had been carried back to the ancient Republic. A secretary of the Emperor, Titinius Capito, placed in his hall, statues of Brutus, Cassius, and Cato, now no longer considered seditious persons. He wrote the history of these eminent citizens immolated by tyranny, and gave public readings from them, at which all the highest society of Rome congregated.¹ But men who must be commanded to be free, never will be so. Liberty is seized; or, which is better, public opinion imposes it. The people who would receive it by order would neither be worthy of it nor capable of preserving it. In reality, the authority of Trajan was as absolute as that of any of his predecessors. Pliny, in his *Letters*, where he is no longer hampered by official eloquence, clearly shows that Rome had not ceased to have a master. "It is true," says he, "that all is done according to the will of one man, who, in the common interest, takes upon himself the cares and labors of all."³ He so far forgets himself, in the *Panegyric*, as to make the Emperor the universal proprietor, "who may at his will dispose of all that others possess."⁴

CASSIUS.²

¹ Pliny, *Epist.* i. 17; viii. 12.

² Statue, beautiful in style and well preserved. The plinth bears the name of Cassius (Villa Massimi. Clarac, *Musée de Sculpt.* pl. 912B, No. 2,303).

³ *Sunt quidem cuncta sub unius arbitrio, qui pro utilitate communi solus omnium curas laboresque suscepit* (iv. 20).

⁴ . . . *Cujus est quidquid est omnium, tantum ipse quantum omnes habet* (27).

But this power Trajan, without hypocrisy or subterfuge, — and herein he is distinguished from Augustus, — enveloped in the forms of liberty, for the reason that courtesy was part of his nature; for the reason also that he had but one desire, — the welfare of the state; and lastly, because, having witnessed the homicidal struggle between Domitian and the aristocracy, he remembered what odium that strife had cast upon the Emperor, and of what strength it had deprived the government, obliging it to expend, in defeating real or imaginary plots, the attention and resources which the public service required.

Leaving, therefore, the idle senators seated in their curule chairs, let us observe the action of the Emperor. Trajan is one of the most sympathetic figures in history. If he lacks the lofty intelligence and political audacity of the reconstructive reformer, he possesses the wisdom and the power which consolidate and preserve. With the miracle of a succession of Emperors such as he, Rome would have been saved; because in countries of absolute government the ruler's power for good is equal to his power for evil. In his decisions we always discern the spirit of justice; in his administrative correspondence, perfect good sense; in his private life, moderation and discretion, with the exception of certain vices of the time;¹ in the palace, economy; in the public works, lavish expenditure; in all, and for all, discipline, order, and an absolute respect for the law.

Thus he was unwilling that condemnation should be pronounced against a person involuntarily absent, or upon an anonymous denunciation. "It is better," he wrote to Severus, "to let a guilty person escape than punish an innocent one."² This was the simplest equity, and there would be no occasion to praise him for it if others had not so often done the opposite. For suits with the treasury he established a tribunal whose judge was designated by lot, and in which the parties had the right of challenge. "Power

¹ Fronto (*Ad M. Anton. de Fer. Als.* 3) says of him: *Summus bellator tam histrionibus interdum sese delectavit et praeterea potavit satis strenue*, and Aurel. Victor is obliged (*De Caes.* 13) to say: *Curari vetans jussa post longiores epulas*. He had another vice of the time. When Julian makes him enter the assembly of the gods, Silenus, at the sight of him, becomes anxious for Ganymede. "Our lord Jupiter," says he, "must now keep watch over our cup-bearer."

² *Digest*, xlviii. 19, 5.

and liberty," says Pliny, "plead at the same forum, and most frequently it is not the treasury that wins,—the treasury, whose case is never a poor one except under a good ruler."¹

He often sat among the judges, heard the witnesses, and rendered decisions, though it might, as in case of Marius Priscus, require him to remain three whole days in the Senate, over which he presided as consul. He received appeals from all the tribunals of the Empire, and retained the cases for which his personal examination was solicited. Pliny has left us the picture of one of these imperial assizes, in a charming letter which awakens our love for the writer, but far more for the Emperor concerning whom it was written. "I have been," says he, "summoned to a council at Centum Cellae. Cases of different kinds were heard. Claudius Aristo, the most important man among the Ephesians, had been accused by envious persons. He was acquitted, and received satisfaction."² The next day the case of Galitta, wife of a military tribune, was heard. She was accused of adultery with a centurion. The husband wrote an account of it to the consular legate, who referred the matter to the Emperor. The proofs being conclusive, Caesar degraded the centurion and condemned him to banishment. His accomplice remained. Affection caused the husband to delay; and, content with the removal of his rival, he retained his wife in his house. He was summoned to finish the prosecution, which he did reluctantly; and against his wishes she was sentenced to the punishment decreed by the *Lex Julia*. The Emperor added to the sentence both the name of the centurion and an account of the military discipline, lest it might be imagined he reserved the power of all such trials to himself.³

"The third day were examined the testamentary provisions of Julius Tiro, some of which were admitted and others charged to have been forged. Sempronius Senecio, a Roman knight, and Eurythmus, a freedman of the Emperor and an officer of his household, were accused in this case. The heirs, by a joint epistle, had petitioned the Emperor during his Dacian expedition to take cognizance of the case himself. On his return to Rome he appointed

¹ *Panegy.* 36.

² That is, the delator was punished. I give only so much of this letter as treats of the judgments.

³ It is as imperator, or chief of the army, that he gave judgment in this cause.

a day for their hearing. Some of those interested, out of respect to a freedman of the palace, chose to abandon the prosecution. 'I am not Nero,' said he to them, 'nor is he Polycletus.' Then, in accordance with the opinion of the council, he commanded that notice should be given to all the heirs to prosecute their cause, or that each of them should assign his reasons for desisting; otherwise he would pronounce sentence against them as calumniators. You see how honorably and usefully our days were passed."¹

He disliked the informers, although that class was a necessity at Rome, and the law encouraged them by according to them, even in civil cases, one quarter of the fortune of the condemned (*quadruptatores*). Under the bad Emperors they gained far more. Trajan, who had already expelled from Rome those who had been most compromised in the political accusations, greatly lessened for the others the perquisites of their industry, by deciding that citizens in possession of property liable to confiscation who should voluntarily make a declaration of it to the treasury prior to the introduction of any suit, should be allowed to retain half. He seems even to have established a sort of *lex talionis*.² Pliny shows Trajan threatening to condemn as calumniators those who preferred a charge without sustaining the accusation; and the penalty was a grave one, — usually that which the accused would have incurred. "Let them suffer," says Pliny, "what they have made others suffer; let them fear as much as they were feared."³

The law of treason had received a deplorable extension by the permission granted to slaves to accuse their master. Trajan⁴ withdrew this right from them. At the same stroke he broke one of the weapons of tyranny and restored peace to the bosom of families, relieving the rich from the apprehension of being surrounded by malicious spies in their own homes and in the intimacy and secrecy of private life. He strengthened the discipline of slavery and clientage, deciding by an edict that the freedman or slave who had purchased or obtained of an emperor, without the knowledge of his patron or master, the complete right of citizen-

¹ *Epist.* v. 31.

² This is the opinion of Bach, *De Leg. Traj. imp. comment.*

³ *Panegy.* 35.

⁴ The torso of this statue of Trajan (next page) was found, in 1747, near ancient Minturnae. On the cuirass are two young girls dancing at the side of Minerva. The head is added, but antique. The arms and legs are restored (Clarac, *Mus.* pl. 942, No. 2,412).

ship, and consequently the free disposition of his property, might indeed retain this right during his lifetime, but at his death became a Latin freedman, so that his fortune might revert to his former patron.¹ The older legislation condemned to death all the slaves of a master who had been assassinated; this was made still more severe by an ordinance of Trajan subjecting to torture not only the testamentary freedmen, but those who, having received during the life time of the master their liberty possessed in totality or in part the Roman citizenship. This Emperor did not then feel the force of the doctrines which were undermining slavery. He preserved the ancient institution, and yet he did not allow it to be fraudulently altered. A great number of children born free had been exposed or stolen, and served as slaves. He recognized their perpetual right to reclaim their liberty, without having to repurchase it by payment for the maintenance which they had received.²

With the same spirit of justice he directed a legitimate blow at undue paternal authority, requiring the father who had maltreated his son to give the latter his freedom.³ It appears that we must also date back to him the creation of the *curator rei publicae*,—a function excellent within the limitations which he gave it, but injurious to municipal independence when it had become the foremost office in the cities. At least, it is in three inscriptions of the reign of Trajan that we find the earliest mention of these special magistrates appointed by the Emperor to look after the financial administration of the municipia.⁴ Bergamum, which had one, found itself from that day under guardianship, being unable, without authority from its curator, to alienate a part of its domain, or even undertake a construction of any importance. Aecae, in Apulia, and ancient Caere obtained them. These towns had doubtless solicited the intervention of the Emperor,

¹ Martial, *Epigr.* x. 34. Cf. Pliny, *Epist.* x. 4 and 6.

² Pliny, *Epist.* x. 72. Constantine later gave the right of paternal authority to him who adopted and reared an abandoned child.

■ *Digest*, xxxvii. 12, 5. He accorded to a ward an action of indemnity against the magistrate who had not exercised suitable care in the choice of his tutors.

⁴ L. Renier, *Mélanges d'épigraphie*, p. 41; Orelli, 3,787, 3,898, and 4,007, and Henzen, *Ann. de l'Inst. arch.* 1851, pp. 5-35. The *curator* of the Antonines is not the functionary who was to absorb all the life of the cities; he is a comptroller who guards the towns from incurring unsuitable expense and from the unfaithful conduct of certain agents.

as we shall further on see Apamea requesting Pliny to audit its accounts. It was well to send them a temporary commissioner, with a special mission to correct irregularities and bring matters into good condition; but it was an injury to create a permanent function which would eventually suppress the administrative autonomy of the cities.

He also sent a legate into the Transpadane territory. The presence of a superior magistrate invested with the military *imperium* had doubtless been rendered necessary there by some tumult; but Italy lost one of its privileges, and the whole region beyond the Po was brought back to the condition of a provincial territory.

During his reign of nineteen years Trajan augmented no tribute, but diminished several,¹ confiscated no fortune, and exacted no legacy. "The citizens at last enjoyed security in making their wills, and the Emperor was no longer, in consequence of his name having been inscribed or omitted on the testamentary document, the sole heir of every one."² He refused the presents, formerly voluntary, but at this time obligatory, which people were required to offer to the Emperor as a "gift of happy accession," and he remitted the arrears of taxes.³ This had been done by several of his predecessors; but he abolished the distinction which Augustus by the law of the twentieth had established between the old and new citizens. Those who had attained the municipal right by the privileges of Latium, or who had obtained it from Emperors without receiving at the same time the *jus cognationis*, were considered as strangers in their own family, and subjected, when they succeeded to an inheritance, to the payment of dues, even were they father, son, or brother of the deceased. Many small heritages were consequently exempted from dues of transmission,⁴ as we exempt lesser tenants from tax in great cities. It was a diminution of receipts; but at the same time the Emperor employed a senatorial commission in seeking means of lessening the public expenditure;⁵ and we may be sure that with a firm will, as was that of Trajan, the commission fulfilled its duty.

¹ Pliny, *Panegy.* 41.

² *Panegy.* 43. Cf. Suet., *Calig.* 38; *Nero*, 31, 32.

³ A marble, found at Rome in 1872, seems to represent Trajan burning a pile of tablets bearing treasury dues (*Bull. di Corresp. archeol.* 1872, p. 280).

⁴ *Panegy.* 37-40.

⁵ *Minuendis publicis sumptibus* (Pliny, *Epist.* ii. 1, and *Panegy.* 62).



STATUE OF TRAJAN (MUSEUM OF NAPLES).

It is, in fact, curious to see with what ease the finances of the Empire recovered as soon as an intelligent ruler put a stop to foolish prodigalities. We know the financial embarrassments of Domitian and Nero; their successor, thanks to order established in all things, and to economy in the expenditures of luxury and ceremonial, was in a condition to carry on immense public works, a great war, magnificent building enterprises, all the while diminishing the taxes; and yet had resources remaining to create the noblest institution of the Empire.

Nerva, some months before his death, had resolved to aid poor parents of free condition to rear their children, to "insure," as an inscription has it, "the eternity of Italy."¹ Trajan adopted this project and gave it grand proportions. As early as the year 100,

five thousand children received state aid at Rome.³ The Inscription of Veleia, one of the longest which have come down to us, and the Table of the Baebiani for the apportionment of food among the



FLYING VICTORY.²

¹ That relating to Pomponius Bassus, *ap. Orelli*, No. 784 : *Qua aeternitati Italiae suae prospexit . . . ita ut omnis aetas curae ejus merito gratias agere debeat.*

² Bronze figurine found at Veleia (*Cabinet de France*).

³ Pliny, *Panegy.* 28. For the distributions it was still the custom at Rome to make use of the lists prepared by Caesar, on which new names were inscribed as often as vacancies occurred, *in locum erasorum*. Trajan ordered that the portion for the sick and the absent should be held in reserve until they were able to come and receive it (*Panegy.* 25).

poor, enable us to ascertain the ingenious system which he devised.¹ The means employed consisted of a twofold operation skilfully combined to secure the future of the institution against the hasty caprices of a less generous government. The treasury lent money on mortgage, through the municipality, to certain proprietors for the improvement of their estates, and the interest paid by them at the moderate rate of 5 per cent, sometimes even of $2\frac{1}{2}$,² supplied the resources by means of which a sort of benevolent fund was established. Thus, according to the Table of Veleia, fifty-one proprietors had received, for property of ten or twelve times the value of the loan on mortgage,³ a sum of 1,116,000 sesterces (\$52,820), the annual interest of which, 55,800 sesterces (\$2,650), served for the support of three hundred children, — two hundred and sixty-four boys and thirty-six girls. The boys received annually 192 sesterces (\$9.20), the girls 144 (\$6.90).⁴ Illegitimate children

¹ The former was discovered, in 1747, at Veleia, near Placentia, and contains six hundred and thirty lines in seven columns. In 1832 the latter was found at Campolattari, near Benevento: *Tabula alimentaria Baebianorum*. The first is of the year 104, the second of the year 101. Veleia was destroyed by a landslip from a mountain in the time of Probus (*Rev. arch.* 1881, p. 242).

² The usual interest in the provinces was 12 per cent: *Duodenis assibus* (Pliny, *Epist.* x. 62). It remained at this rate from Severus to Justinian. In Italy it was only 6 (Columella, iii. 3, and Pliny, *Epist.* vi. 18). We have seen (Vol. IV. p. 124) Augustus lend without interest to whoever could give security for twice the amount; Tiberius did the same (Vol. IV. p. 487); and later, Alex. Severus lent money to the poor at 3 per cent to enable them to purchase land.

³ This is at least the relative value most frequently found in the tables of Veleia and of the Baebiani. Cf. Desjardins, *De Tabulis alim.*, and Henzen, *Tab. alim.*

⁴ The sesterce is here estimated at a little less than five cents, about the value given it at this time by Dureau de la Malle, Hultsch, Friedländer, and Mommsen; but the estimate is probably too high. Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* xviii. 20, 2) gives as the average price of flour in his time forty ases, or ten sesterces, the modius. He adds that the modius (nearly two gallons) furnished twenty-six or twenty-seven pounds of bread. The Roman pound being a little less than three fourths of a pound avoirdupois, for ten sesterces they had then about nineteen pounds of bread, and for a hundred and ninety-two sesterces, the annual allowance of a boy, three hundred and sixty-five pounds a year, or a pound a day. But the price of wheat — four sesterces a modius in the time of Cicero (*Verr.* iii. 77) — had certainly not risen in the country as high as the figure given by Pliny for choice flour, and we know that at that time an abstemious philosopher could support existence on half a sesterce a day. Seneca, urging Lucilius to live from time to time on hard, coarse bread (*panis durus ac sordidus*), to practise voluntary poverty, tells him: "It will not cost you more than two ases to be satisfied, *dipondio satur*" (*Epist.* vi. 18). Origen, who lived a long time on four oboli a day (or eleven cents), was wastefully extravagant. Epicurus succeeded in making on certain days less than one as suffice; but his disciple, Metrodorus, who had not yet attained the state of perfection of the *magister voluptatis*, required an entire as (*Ibid.*). Besides, Seneca (*Epist.* 63) informs us that the salary of an actor playing important parts, but of servile condition, was five modii and five denarii per month; that is, per day a little more than two and a fifth pounds of bread and two and a half ases.

had less, — the boys 144 sesterces, the girls 120; but in the three hundred assisted in Veleia, only two illegitimate are included, — one boy and one girl. The foundation was established for a definite number of children, a number that did not change so long as the foundation was not increased; but the assistance varied, doubtless as the price of provisions in different localities: thus, at Veleia, 16 sesterces per month, at Terracina, 20.

At first glance we are tempted to believe that this institution arose from the sentiment of charity which philosophy infiltrated into the heart of pagan society. But considering that among the children assisted only one tenth were girls, it must be recognized that the alimentary law of Trajan had the same end as the laws of Augustus *de prole augenda*,¹ — it was an encouragement given to the free population; and we remember that already the first Emperor had admitted children in Rome to his distributions. Pliny shows plainly the character of the new institution: "These children are reared at the expense of the state, to be its support in war, its ornament in peace. Some day they will fill our camps, our tribes; and from them will arise sons who will no longer need this assistance."² But in another place he adds: "The truly liberal man gives to his country, to his neighbors, to his poor friends. . . . He seeks out those who are in want, succors them, maintains them, and makes a kind of family of them."³ Trajan himself reprimanded the towns which expended their revenues foolishly instead of aiding the poor;⁴ and the extension given to the alimentary institution by his successors, and the foundations which private individuals established, certainly had also for their motive an idea of benevolence, which may again be discovered in the

Friedländer (ii. 27) gives the reckoning of a dinner at a Cisalpine inn which cost only three ases; in the time of Polybius (ii. 15) it cost one sixth of this ἡμισσαρίον, — one half of an as, or three fifths of a cent. From all this it results that with sixty-four or eighty ases per month, sixteen or twenty sesterces, a child of poor family could live. In spite of the character of the *Satyricon*, it is allowable to take some account of these words of Petronius: "Then a loaf for an as was sufficient for two persons; to-day the as loaves are not bigger than a bull's eye."

¹ Tacitus complains of the diminution of the class of free men in Italy, *minore in dies plebe ingenua* (*Ann.* iv. 27).

² *Panegy.* 28.

³ *Epist.* ix. 30; x. 94.

⁴ For instance, at Amisus, where he desired that a part of the revenue should be employed *ad sustinendam tenuiorum inopiam* (Pliny, *Epist.* x. 104). A woman of Alexandria having brought forth at one birth three boys and two girls, Trajan or Hadrian assumed the expense of rearing them (Phlegon, *Περὶ θαυμασίων*, 58, ed. Didot).

very ancient usage of *sportulae* accorded to clients, and the distributions of land or grain made to the poor of Rome since the epoch of the Republic.¹

It is to be noted that if, by the scheme which Trajan had devised, the state lost the interest of its money, which it could afford to do, while a private money-lender could not, it preserved the capital, which, passing from one proprietor to another, carried fruitfulness to the country lands. The enfeebled agriculture of Italy was succored² at the same time with the poor families; and the government hoped that these, having received timely assistance, would improve in their condition, so that many of them, in the second generation, would have no further need of public aid.



TRAJAN, RESTORER OF
ITALY.³

Our modern societies, pervaded by the same evil as the Roman Empire, the proletariat, have as yet devised nothing so broad, and we may also add so skilfully conceived, as the alimentary law of Trajan; for we have for poor children only a few asylums and a system of gratuitous instruction.

It cannot be affirmed that the institution was in a general measure established in the whole of Italy; but coins, inscriptions, and even sculptures, enable us to discover it in many places. Thus the bas-reliefs of the Arch of Beneventum represent men carrying boys on their shoulders, and four women, their heads adorned with mural crowns, conducting young girls to Trajan. Do these women represent the four towns of the vicinity, or are they the symbol of all the cities of Italy which had profited by the same benefaction? The second hypothesis is the more probable, and Dion confirms it.⁴

¹ We read in an inscription as early as the time of Augustus: . . . *hominis boni, misericordis, amantis pauperes* (Henzen, *ap.* Orelli, No. 7,244). The centurion Cornelius, in the *Acts of the Apostles*, was praised, before his conversion, for his alms to the poor.

² Another measure favorable to property in Italy, without always being so to its agriculture, was the edict which obliged the provincials who were candidates for the magistracies of Rome to have a third of their estate in Italy (Pliny, *Epist.* vi. 19). This was in the spirit of a law of Caesar and of another of Tiberius. This edict was renewed by Marcus Aurelius, who only required a quarter (Capitolin., *M. Anton.* 11).

³ Great Bronze, Cohen, No. 373.

⁴ lxviii. 5. Cf. Rossini, *Gli Archi trionfali*, tav. 38-43, and the coin last given (Cohen, ii. *Trajan*, No. 373), which represents Trajan standing, holding a sceptre and raising up Italy,

Provincial cities and wealthy individuals followed the example given by the Emperors;¹ this pagan society, which ameliorated



ARCH OF TRAJAN, BUILT IN 114 BY APOLLODORUS AT BENEVENTUM.

the lot of the slave, which was mindful of the destitution of its poor, and taught with Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius the finest

who kneels at his feet; between them two children extending their hands; and for legend: REST. ITALIAE. Cf. *Id.*, Nos. 13, 14, 299-304.

¹ The successors of Trajan preserved and developed this institution. Hadrian, says Spartianus, 7, *pueris ac puellis . . . incrementum liberalitatis adjecit*; and he decided that the alimentary pension should be continued to the boys until eighteen, to the girls until fourteen (*Digest*, xxxiv. 1, 14). Antoninus, in honor of his wife, increased the number of the young girls assisted, *Faustinianae* (Capit., 8). We possess inscriptions in the name of the *pueri et puellae alimenta* ii of Cupra Montana, in honor of Antoninus and Urbinus, and of Ficulnea in honor of Marcus Aurelius. Capitolinus says of this Emperor: *De alimentis publicis multa prudenter invenit*; and, like his predecessor at the death of the second Faustina, *Novas puellas*

precepts of morality, thus showed before its downfall that it possessed within itself powers of renewal sufficient to save it, had it not been ruined by bad legislation.

Among the number of benevolent measures undertaken by Trajan must be reckoned the colonization of Dacia, executed on a scale so vast that the Latin race still holds the immense country of which it then took possession. That this should be the case requires us to admit that the number of colonists was considerable,

Faustinianas instituit. Alexander Severus instituted also, in the name of his mother, Mammaea, *Mammaeas* and *Mammaeanos* (Lampridius, 57). Macrinus proposed to do the same (*Id.*, *Diad.* 2). The example of the Emperors was followed by the rich citizens; thus Pliny (*Epist.*



COIN IN MEMORY OF THE
ALIMENTARY LAW.⁽¹⁾

vi. 18 and i. 8) instituted on one of his estates, in favor of Comum, his native town, a perpetual revenue of thirty thousand sesterces in *alimenta ingenuorum*; Caelia Macrina bequeathed one million sesterces to support a hundred children at Terracina (Borghesi, *Œuvres*, iv. 269, with annotations of L. Renier); a woman of Hispalis established a similar foundation (*C. I. L.* vol. ii. No. 1,174); at Sicca, under Marcus Aurelius, a citizen presented to the town one million three hundred thousand sesterces, in order that, with interest at 5 per cent, there might be annually support for three hundred boys and two hundred girls between the ages of four and fifteen, chosen by the duumviri from the families not only of the *municipes*, but also of the *incolae* established in the city. Each boy received two and a half denarii per month, each girl two

denarii; and the list of the assisted was to be kept full (Guérin, *Voy. en Tunisie*, vol. ii. p. 59, No. 234). We find at Curubis in Africa a *curator alimentorum*. (Cf., for other examples, Henzen, *Tab. alim.* pp. 16 seq.) This custom was even ancient; a contemporary of Augustus, Helvius Basila, *Atinatribus sestertium quadringenta millia legavit ut liberis eorum ex reditu, dum in aetatem pervenirent, frumentum et postea sestertia singula millia darentur* (Orelli, No. 4,365). In each town a *quaestor alimentorum* administered the fund of this institution. It seems that Marcus Aurelius had created, for the general oversight of this service, the *praefecti alim.*, who were men of high standing, former consuls and governors of provinces: *praef. alim. per Aemiliam*; *praef. alim. viae Flaminiae*, etc. (See Borghesi, *Œuvres*, iv. 135 seq.) We find again in 238, at Sarmizegetusa, a procurator of Dacia who had been, about the year 220, *procurator ad alimenta per Apuliam, Lucaniam et Bruttios* (*C. I. L.*, vol. iii. No. 1,456. On the great development of this institution, see the reign of Caracalla). According to inscriptions and coins (Eckhel, vi. 406, coins of Gallienus and Claudius II.), the institution of Trajan seems to have lasted into the second half of the third century; the calamities of this epoch caused it to disappear. Constantine, in 315, attempted to combat the fearful progress of want by charity. His law (Code Theod. xi. 27, 1 and 2) prescribed alms, but did not revive the grand institution of the Antonines.



COIN IN MEMORY OF
THE ALIMENTARY
LAW OF TRAJAN.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ S. P. Q. R. OPTIMO PRINCIPI S. C. ALIM. ITAL. A woman, standing, holding ears of corn and a horn of plenty; at her side a child. Large bronze of the *Cabinet de France*.

⁽²⁾ The Emperor seated, has before him a woman who is presenting children to him, one of whom is in her arms. Reverse of a bronze of the *Cabinet de France*.

and it is not to be supposed that they were taken among the rich. There was, therefore, a very extensive distribution of lands made, after the example of Republican Rome, to the needy of the Empire. In giving lands, implements must also have been given, with seed, cattle, and everything necessary for a first establishment in a climate rigorous for men of Southern race. The spoils of the Dacians served for these advances, and a number of towns were relieved of a part of their poor.¹

We should not venture to say that Trajan established free trade in grain, and consequently produced a decline in the price of wheat, or a more equable distribution of it; but the measures indicated by Pliny must have tended at least to this result,² and were a benefit.



THE FORUM OF
TRAJAN, FORVM
TRAIAN (GOLD
COIN).



THE ULPIAN
BASILICA: BASI-
LICA VLPPIA
(GOLD COIN).

Trajan honored his reign by great public works,—another way of giving bread to the poor. Apollodorus, the bold constructor of the bridge over the Danube, wrote in marble that grand page of history which unrolls around the column at whose foot the Emperor caused his tomb to be prepared, and was also the architect of a new forum, which by its splendor eclipsed all the constructions of the Caesars. Two centuries and a half later, Constantius contemplated it with admiration, and Ammianus Marcellinus esteemed it “the most magnificent group of edifices under the sun.”³ With his arch of triumph, the temple during his life-time consecrated to the divinity of Trajan, his two libraries, one for Greek and the other for Latin books, his basilica, his immense porticos surmounted by a population of great men in marble and bronze, forming, as it were, a guard of honor around the Emperor’s equestrian statue, and his triumphal column, Trajan surpassed Augustus in magnificence.

¹ When Trajan raised Petovium to the rank of a colony, he sent thither some veterans *missione agraria*, who were true colonists in the ancient meaning of the word (*C. I. L.* vol. iii. No. 4,057).

² *Panegy.* 29–32: . . . *Emit fiscus quidquid emere videtur; inde copiae, inde annona, de qua inter licentem vendentemque conveniat; inde hic satietas, nec fumes usquam.* He reorganized at Rome the guild of bakers, and the regulations which he gave them were so wise that Aurelius Victor could say (*De Caes.* 13) that Trajan had thereby *annonae perpetuae mire consultum*.

■ xvi. 10: *Singularem sub coelo structuram.*

Rome owed to this great builder¹ many other embellishments, of which we will mention only a tenth aqueduct, conducting to the Janiculum water from Lake Sabatinus (Lago di Bracciano).²

Two of the best harbors of Italy, not made by nature alone, are the work of Trajan, and they still remain,—on the Adriatic, that of Ancona, where a white marble arch of triumph recalls the benefactor of the town, and by its elegance puts to



INTERIOR OF THE ULPIAN BASILICA.³

shame the arch which has been injudiciously erected in the vicinity to Pope Clement XII.; and on the sea of Tuscany, that of Civita Vecchia (Centum Cellae), a city which owes everything to this Emperor. To hasten the execution of the work, he had a villa built there, in which he resided for some time. Pliny, who passed several days there, describes the casting of great rocks into the sea, to form in front of the harbor and its two

¹ *Orbem terrarum aedificans* (Eutropius, viii. 2).

■ This is the *Acqua Paola* of modern Rome.

■ Restoration by Lesueur.

moles a dike against which the sea broke with fury. Extensive sanitary works were undertaken throughout all Italy, and the celebrated Galen, who was almost a contemporary, extols their happy effects upon the public health. "Many old roads were out of repair and encroached upon by brushwood; others difficult of ascent, dangerous to descend, or gullied by torrents. By the Emperor's care the low, wet portions were paved, the places difficult to pass were levelled, the turbulent waters restrained by dikes and bridges."¹ On one of these highways, reconstructed at the expense of the Emperor, the Senate caused the Arch of



CIVITA VECCHIA; HARBOR OF CENTUM CELLAE.²

Beneventum to be erected, to preserve the remembrance of these great works. Trajan, like Caesar, proposed to drain the Pontine Marshes, and Dion speaks of causeways which he constructed there; but the levels were badly taken, and the Ponte Maggiore, through which the waters were to flow off, did not afford a sufficient outlet for them.³ He seems to have resuscitated, by means of a colony, the ancient city of Lavinium, whither the consuls

¹ *De Meth. medendi*, ix. 8.

² Restoration, *Bibl. nationale*.

³ De Prony, *Desséchement des marais pontins*, pp. 76 and 241.

and praetors were required to go at their entrance on their duties, to offer sacrifices to Vesta and the Penates.¹

He enlarged the harbor at Ostia by excavating an inner basin or dock, the Portus Trajani, opening into the Tiber by a canal (now considered an arm of the river), and thus provided for vessels a surface of water of two hundred and eighty acres.² In Egypt, Trajan made such extensive improvements in the *Ptolemaeus amnis*, between the Nile and the Red Sea, that the canal henceforth bore his name, *Τραιανὸς ποταμός*. This gave new facilities to commerce, and especially for working the fine quarries of porphyry and granite at Djebel-Dokhan and Djebel-Fateereh, in the neighborhood of the harbors of Myos-Hormos and Philotera, so that columns quarried there were easily transported to Rome and to all the maritime cities of the Empire.³

We have seen that he threw two substantial bridges across the Rhine and the Danube. They have disappeared, as well as those which he constructed to keep open to the legions the countries situated beyond the Tigris and the Euphrates. Another bridge, in ruins, has been discovered in the valley of the Medjerda, in Tunis; but that of Alcantara, over the Tagus, still stands, 197 feet high, and 616 feet long.⁴ For the latter, Trajan had only to second the zeal of the provincials by sending one of his best architects to several Lusitanian cities, which had taxed themselves for the expense of this colossal structure,—a new proof of the prosperity of the provinces at this period, and of the ease with which they could be interested in objects which were for their common advantage. Numerous inscriptions show that roads were also made or repaired at the expense of the municipalities whose territory they traversed, aided sometimes by a grant from the treasury.

¹ The custom still existed in the time of Macrobius (*Sat.* II. iv.).

² Lanciani, *Sulla città di Porto*.

³ Letronne, *Inscr. gr. et rom. d'Égypte*, i. 195 and 420. At Djebel-Fateereh, or *Mons Claudianus*, in the Porphyritic chain, several inscriptions prove that Trajan gave a great impulse to the work of these quarries (*C. I. L.* vol. iii. Nos. 24, 25, and Letronne, *Inscr. d'Égypte*, 39-42). At Djebel-Fateereh, at a distance of ten leagues from the Red Sea, monoliths have been found lying on the ground which were 59 feet long by 26½ feet in circumference.

⁴ *C. I. L.* vol. ii. Nos. 759, 762. That of Chaves (*Aquae Flaviae*), over the Tamago, in Galicia, is also in existence (*C. I. L.* vol. ii. No. 2,478). There is no bridge in England as high as that of Alcantara, and only one in France, that of Saint Sauveur, which surpasses it by a few yards.



BRIDGE OF ALCANTARA, CONSTRUCTED BY TRAJAN.

In imitation of the capital, the provincial cities expended enormous sums for their embellishment. Whence did they obtain all this money? The Emperor had recently opened to them a new and prolific source of revenue. The old jurisprudence, considering the towns, like the guilds or associations, as "undefined persons," did not deem them capable of receiving a legacy,¹ at least without a special authorization.² Nerva recognized in them this capability; but in terms so vague, it appears, that the prudent Pliny did not dare to use this rescript.³ The Aponian senatus-consultum, passed under Trajan, permits cities to receive inheritances by way of trusteeship,—a last inconvenience, which finally disappeared under Hadrian.⁴ Then the city became a civil person, as the French commune is; but the situation differed greatly from that which now exists. Municipal patriotism was in those times vastly more active than now, and there were no religious societies to attract the liberality of the dying; so that donations, once being authorized, became very abundant, and went directly to the city to serve its wants, and even its pleasures.⁵ Often, on the eve of a municipal election, a candidate agreed to execute some public work for the town, and, on the morrow, forgot his promise. A rescript made this promise a legal obligation which bound even his heirs.⁶ Finally, the abstraction of municipal funds, hitherto considered as a simple misappropriation, was made the same with peculation,—an offence punished by confiscation and banishment.⁷ This explains to us how it came to pass that the whole Empire, at the epoch of the Antonines, was covered with aqueducts, thermae, theatres, bridges, and with roads traversed by the imperial post, which had lately been reorganized.⁸ The honor of

¹ Ulpian, *Fr.* xxii. 5.

² See in Vol. VI. the chapter concerning the *City*, sect. 3.

³ *Epist.* v. 7.

⁴ Paulus, *Digest*, xxxvi. 1, 26; *Cod.* vi. 24, 12; and Ulpian, *Fr.* xxiv. 28: *Civitātibus . . . legari potest; idque a D. Nerva introductum, postea a senatu, auctore Hadriano, diligentius constitutum est.*

⁵ Paulus (*Digest*, xxx. *Fr.* 122) says: *Civitātibus legari potest quod ad honorem ornatumque civitatis pertinet. Ad ornatum, puta quod ad instruendum forum, theatrum, stadium legatum fuerit. Ad honorem, puta quod ad munus edendum, venationemve, ludos scenicos, ludos circenses relictum fuerit, aut quod ad divisionem singulorum civium, vel epulum relictum fuerit. Hoc amplius, quod in alimenta infirmæ ætatis (puta, senioribus, vel pueris, puellisque) relictum fuerit.*

⁶ Paulus, *Digest*, xlviii. 13, 2 and 4, sect. 4.

⁷ *Digest*, l. 12, 14, pr.

⁸ It was maintained by the cities. Nerva, in 97, had exempted the Italian towns from

this impulse given to public works was justly ascribed to the Emperor; and so many monuments, from the shores of the Tagus to those of the Euphrates, bore the date of his reign, that Constantine, vexed at finding this name everywhere, compared Trajan to the pellitory, which attaches itself to every wall. But these temples, these basilicas, bridges, and aqueducts were built by him,¹ or he had encouraged the construction of them; and he had not decorated them with spoils stolen from others, while Constantine carried away bas-reliefs from the Arch of Trajan to ornament the one he erected in Rome.

Yet men were found to conspire against this Emperor, so difficult was it for the Roman nobles to abandon plots, even under a ruler who treated them with so much consideration. One Crassus, who had been condemned under Nerva for a like attempt, sought to assassinate Trajan. The Emperor refused to pay attention to the affair personally, merely allowing the Senate to inquire into it, render judgment, and put into execution the mild sentence of banishment. Crassus is the only senator who was punished under this reign for an attempt against the Emperor's life.²

This master of the Roman world who, more than any other, deserved a historian, has none;³ and when we have completed our study of the monuments, inscriptions, and coins, and of a few rare fragments scattered here and there in the epitomists, we know nothing more of his reign. Yet there remains to us a document of this time, valuable as showing, by an example taken from life, the state of the provinces, the duties of the legate, the part of the

this tax. (See on this point p. 221.) Trajan appears to have improved the service by correcting abuses, such as the use which private persons made of the *cursus publicus* in their private interest, and by placing the service under the direction of *praefecti vehiculorum*. (Cf. Pliny, *Epist.* x. 62 and 120, and Henzen, *Ann. de l'Inst. arch.*, 1857, p. 98.) The passage of Aur. Victor (*Caes.* 13) is not clear.

¹ The bridge of Simittu Colonia had been built *opera militum suorum et pecunia sua*.

² . . . *Unus senator damnatus per Senatum*, says Eutropius (viii. 2), *ignorante Trajano*. He had accomplices who were banished, or other plots were formed. At least, at the beginning of the following reign a friend of Hadrian induced him to rid himself of one Laberius Maximus, who was banished to an island under suspicion of having aspired to the Empire, and of Crassus Frugi, who was put to death for having quitted his place of exile.

³ Historians he had, but their works are not in existence. The writings of his biographers Marius Maximus, Fabius Marcellinus, Aurelius Verus, and Statius Valens, are all lost, as well as the first thirteen books of Ammianus Marcellinus, whose *History of the Emperors*, a continuation of Suetonius, began at Nerva; of Dion only the meagre abstract of Xiphilinus remains to us. The abridgments of Aurelius Victor and of Eutropius give very little information.



BRIDGE OF TRAJAN AT CHEMTOU (SIMITTU COLONIA) IN TUNIS, FROM A DRAWING BY M. CH. TISSOT.

Emperor in the general administration, and how much the towns had already lost of their independence; it is the correspondence of Pliny and Trajan. Let us quote this curious dialogue between the Emperor in his capital and the governor of one of the most remote provinces, Bithynia. The questions are simple, the replies exact, and the inferences obvious.¹

I. *Imperial authorization of public works.*

“May the inhabitants of Prusa be authorized to replace with new *thermae* their baths, which are old and unsightly?” — “Yes, if they do not thereby incur any new taxation, and if the ordinary service is not sufficient.”

“Sinope lacks water. I have found a spring sixteen miles away; but the aqueduct will have to pass for a distance of a thousand paces over soft and uncertain ground. I can easily collect the money required; it remains for me to secure your approval.”² — “Make this aqueduct; but not until you have carefully examined whether the uncertain ground can support the weight of it, and whether the expense does not exceed the ability of the town.”

“Nicomedia has expended 3,329,000 sesterces for an aqueduct which is in ruins, 2,000,000 for another which has been abandoned. I have means for making a third, which will stand, if you will send an aqueduct-builder or an architect.” — “Conduct water to Nicomedia; but ascertain by whose fault so much money has been wasted.”

“Nicaea has expended 10,000,000 sesterces for a theatre which is falling into ruins, and great sums for a gymnasium which has been burned and is in process of rebuilding. The citizens of *Claudiopolis* are excavating a bath with money which the decurions offer for their admission to the curia. What ought I to do with respect to all these works? Send me an architect.” —

¹ The text of these letters is not, of course, given, but merely the briefest indication of their contents. Mommsen, in his *Étude sur Pline*, p. 30, thinks that the correspondence with Trajan extends from September, 111, to some date later than January, 113.

² In these two cases it is a question of abolishing or establishing taxes; and in France to do this requires the decision of a sovereign, — that is to say, a law. Besides, from the nature of the imperial power, the Emperor could always intervene, even for the slightest interests. A prefect of Egypt asked authority of Nero to clear away the sand which accumulated at the foot of the Pyramids (*Letronne, Inscr. d'Égypte*, ii. 466). On all these municipal questions, see, in Vol. VI., the chapter on the *City*.

"You are on the spot, decide. As to architects, we send to Greece for them; you will therefore find them near you."

"It appears to me that the contractors of the works of the town of Prusa are getting more than is due them. Send me a surveyor to measure the work." — "They are to be had everywhere; make good search, and you will find one."

"Amastris is infected by a sewer which ought to be covered. If you permit this work to be executed, I have the money required." — "Roof over this infectious stream."

"There is a great lake on the confines of the territory of Nicomedia; it would be highly advantageous to connect it with the sea by a canal." — "Take care that the lake, in uniting with the sea, does not run out entirely. I will send you from here men conversant with this kind of work."

II. *Supervision of municipal finances.*

"The towns of the province have money, and no borrowers at 12 per cent. Ought I to lessen the rate of interest, and then compel the decurions to take these funds?" — "Put the interest low enough to find takers, but do not force any one to borrow against his wish."

"In the free and allied town of Amisus, which, thanks to you,¹ is governed by its own laws, a request has been made me concerning mutual aid societies. I add it to this letter, that you may see, my lord, how much may be tolerated or forbidden." — "Allow them their societies (*eranoi*) which the treaty of alliance gives them, especially if, instead of expending the product of their assessments in cabals or illicit assemblies, they employ them to relieve their poor. In all the other towns of our dominion it should not be permitted."

"Most of my predecessors have accorded to the towns of Pontus and Bithynia a privileged lien upon the property of their debtors. It would be fitting, sir, that you make a regulation on

¹ Pliny is indeed correct (*Epist.* x. 93) in uniting these words, which nevertheless clash with one another: *Civitas libera et foederata quae beneficio indulgentiae tuae legibus suis utitur*, for the Emperors did not fail to scrutinize, on occasion, the affairs of so-called free cities. Thus Trajan sent Maximus to Achaia *ad ordinandum statum liberarum civitatum* (Pliny, *Epist.* viii. 24); Pliny himself had had a special mission into Bithynia (Wilmanns, 1,180); others were sent out by Hadrian. (Cf. *C. I. L.* Nos. 1,624, 4,033-34, and Orelli, No. 6,482.) The towns themselves often invoked this intervention.

this matter." — "Let it be decided according to the laws peculiar to each town. If they have not a privilege over other creditors, I ought not to grant it to them at the expense of private individuals."

"The inhabitants of Apamea request me to examine their accounts, notwithstanding their privilege of administering their own affairs. Ought I to do it?" — "Yes, since they themselves desire it."

"Julius Piso has received 40,000 denarii as a gift from the senate of Amisus. The *edictus* reclaims them in accordance with your edicts, which forbid such acts of liberality." — "If the gift dates back more than twenty years, let it be considered valid; for, while taking care of the public funds, we must regard the security of the citizens."

"The Nicaeans claim to have received from Augustus the privilege of becoming heirs to the property of their fellow-citizens dying intestate." — "Examine this affair in presence of the parties, with Gemellinus and my freedman, Epimachus, both procurators, and order what may appear to you just."

"The Byzantines spend annually 12,000 sesterces in transmitting to you their formal homage, and 3,000 to send one of their officers to salute the governor of Moesia." — "It is sufficient for them to forward to me through your hands their decree of homage. As to the governor of Moesia, he will pardon them if they make their court to him cheaper," — a reply which certainly pleased Byzantium; for, in spite of the good order maintained in the Empire, to go to Rome was not only an expense, but also a peril. Petronius and Apuleius show that highway robbers were numerous; and we possess a marble on which the good people of Mehadia, on the Danube, sent out by their fellow-citizens, have engraved their gratitude toward the "Divinities of the Waters" for having brought them back safe and sound into their city.¹

¹ *C. I. L.* vol. iii. No. 1,562, in the year 150. These onerous deputations were very frequent; they arrived at every event of note in the life of the Emperors, or at each dispute which arose between quarrelsome cities. A letter has recently been discovered from Antoninus to the Coroneians thanking them for having tendered their condolence for the death of Hadrian and their felicitations for the adoption of Marcus Aurelius. In another he reminds them that their deputies have requested him to decide between them and the Thespians on a matter of some plethra of pasturage (*Bull. de Corresp. hellén.* for 1881, p. 456).

III. *The decurions.*

We have seen Pliny proposing to Trajan to compel the decurions to subscribe for loans of which they had no need. This is the dawning of that idea of making the curiales responsible for the taxes of their cities, which in the end reduced them to so deplorable a condition.¹ Already more than the prescribed number of members are summoned to the senate-house, and these members must pay for an honor which they have not always solicited. Pliny sees in this exaction a source of revenue for the cities, and wishes to make it a legal prescription. "In certain towns of the province," he says, "the decurions are obliged, on their admission to the senate, to give — some a thousand, others two thousand denarii. It rests with you, sir, to make a general law." — "No. The safest way is to follow the custom of each town, especially regarding those who are made decurions against their wish."

"The law of Pompey, observed in Bithynia, requires the age of thirty years in order to exercise the functions of the magistracy and enter the senate. But an edict of Augustus has made twenty-two years the requisite age for the inferior magistracies. I have concluded from this that those who attain to these offices at that age ought to sit in the municipal senate. But what shall be done with regard to others who, having the age prescribed for the magistracies, have not obtained them?"² — "Close the senate-house to them."

IV. *Right of citizenship.*

"To obtain the right of citizenship in a town, it is necessary, by the law of Pompey, to be a native of the province. Many of the decurions belong to other countries. Should they be excluded from the senate-house?" — "No; but see to it that, in the future, the law is better observed."

V. *The defender of the state.*

In some towns we already find ill-defined offices which later developed into the position of the *defensor civitatis*, whose importance was so great in the fourth and fifth centuries. "Byzantium has a legionary centurion to watch over its privileges.

¹ In the third century the decurions were generally called curiales (Henzen, No. 6,414, and *C. I. L.* vol. v. No. 335).

² *Epist.* x. 83. That is to say, those who by birth and fortune were eligible for these offices; as, at Rome, the sons of senators.

Juliopolis of Bithynia desires of you the same favor." — "Byzantium is a great city, visited by a large number of strangers. A guardian of its rights is necessary to it. If I give one to Juliopolis, all



BAS-RELIEF CONSECRATED TO CYBELE.¹

the small towns will want one. It pertains to you to keep watch that no injury be done to the cities in your government."

It has been seen above that Amisus had an *ecdicus*, a sort of town advocate or tribune, whose duty it was to defend its interests before the governor.²

¹ Lebas and Waddington, *Voy. arch. en Grèce*, etc. pl. 44, fig. 1.

² There is found in an inscription of Hadrian (*C. I. L.* vol. iii. No. 586) the name of *defensor*, but with the meaning of advocate pleading for the interests of the town. The *ἐκδικος* was in the time of Cicero the town advocate (*Ad Famil.* xiii. 56, and *ap.* Waddington, the inscription of Cibra, No. 1,212). The *σύνδικος* was a citizen sent on extraordinary occasions to the Emperor or governor for a special affair (*Digest*, l. 4, 18, sect. 13). In this passage it is said: *Defensores quos Graeci syndicos appellant*. Cf. Waddington, *ad n.* 628 and 1,175.

VI. *Religious questions.*

"May a temple of Cybele at Nicomedia be removed?" — "Yes. The provincial soil is not capable of receiving Roman consecrations."

"I am asked to transfer tombs. At Rome a decision of the pontiffs is required. What must I do here?" — "Grant, or refuse, according to justice. It would be too hard to require provincials to come and consult Roman pontiffs in this matter."

"I have found a ruined house in which to construct a bath for the citizens of Prusa. The proprietor built a temple to Claudius there, but nothing is left of it." — "Put the bath in this house, unless the temple has been built; for in that case, even though it may have disappeared, the place remains sacred."

"It is said, sir, that a woman and her sons have been buried in the same place where your statue is set up. The statue is in a library, the burial-places in a large court surrounded by galleries. I beg you to enlighten me as to judging this affair." It might have been a grave matter indeed, under a different emperor, for an accusation of high treason might have arisen from it. Trajan is displeased that he should be thought capable of authorizing it, and replies: "You should not have hesitated about such a question, for you know very well that I do not propose to make my name respected by terror and by accusations of treason. Dismiss this charge, which I shall not consider."

VII. *Military Discipline.*

"Should the prison be guarded by soldiers, or, according to custom, by public slaves? I have stationed both." — "That is not well. Usage must be adhered to, and the soldier must not be sent away from his standard."

"The prefect of the Pontic coast, who has only twelve soldiers, asks for more." — "No. All the chiefs wish to extend their command, and small garrisons destroy the military spirit."

"Slaves have been found among the recruits. What shall be done with them?" — "If they have been chosen, the fault is with the recruiting-officer; if they have been furnished as substitutes, you must punish those whose places they fill; if, knowing their condition, they have come and offered themselves, punish them."

VIII. *Civil Discipline.*

"In many towns, persons condemned to the mines or to combat

as gladiators are serving as public slaves, some of them with wages. What is to be done?" — "Execute the sentences, except in the case of those whose condemnation dates back more than twenty years."

"A man who was sentenced to perpetual banishment by Bassus has remained in the province without making use of the right given him by a *senatus-consultum*, after the rescinding of the acts of Bassus, to claim within two years a new judgment." — "He has disobeyed the law; send him to the prefects of the *praetorium* for a more rigorous punishment."

"Those assuming the *toga virilis*, marrying, beginning some public work, or entering on the exercise of a magistracy, are accustomed to invite the *decurions* and many people, — sometimes more than a thousand persons, — and to give each one a denarius or two. I fear these reunions are assemblies forbidden by your edicts." — "You are right. But I intrust it to your prudence to reform all the abuses of this province."

"A great fire has devastated Nicomedia. Would it not be well to establish a society of a hundred and fifty artisans charged with the duty of looking after fires?" — "No; corporations are good for nothing."

This correspondence gives us an unfavorable opinion of Pliny. Timid, undecided, hesitating about everything, as governor of a great province he makes a sorry figure.¹ Trajan, on the contrary, is clear and precise; he replies like an experienced and just master, commands without verbiage, and in everything makes the law respected. Beneath his affectionate words to "his very dear Secundus,"² one perceives the impatience of a superior whom an incapable subordinate disturbs every day with trifles. But what especially appears from this correspondence is the proof of the imperial omnipotence and of the formidable progress that the centralization has made. It is true that, without a strong general administration, affairs of the state are not attended to, and local affairs run the risk of being badly managed; but to invade everything, — civil and penal laws of cities, the administration of finances, the care of highways and of public works, — was too

¹ Yet he sought, after the example of Cicero, to give counsel to a governor. Compare the two letters (Pliny, viii. 24, and Cicero, *Ep. ad Quint.* i. 1), and you have the measure of the difference between the two men.

² The younger Pliny's name was *C. Plinius Caecilius Secundus*.

much. Already it could almost be said that not a paving-stone in the provinces could be disturbed without a petition to Rome, whether it were a question of covering a muddy stream, or of removing a dead person whose tomb had fallen in; and a courier was sent to Rome to ask what guard should be placed at the door of a prison.

Thus the Emperor makes the law, and, by himself or his lieutenants, decides the particular cases; he governs the Empire, and we may say that he administers the cities, for he does not

hesitate to look into all their affairs, whether these towns are simply municipalities fallen under the power of Rome by conquest, or cities allied and free joined to the Empire by a treaty. Trajan, it is true, respects their laws and their privileges, because he is shrewd and wise; but his legate knows that the Emperor might at will change everything. After reading this official correspondence, we see clearly what the Roman world will become when the Emperor, instead of being Trajan, is Commodus or Elagabalus. We are as yet only in the



TRAJAN, CROWNED WITH LAUREL, WEARING THE PALUDAMENTUM.¹

second century, and we behold the beginning of the evil which is to undermine the Empire. Trajan speaks of persons who are made to enter the senate against their will,² and Pliny already regards the municipal magistrates as slaves of the public interest.

¹ Cameo. Sardonyx of three layers, $3\frac{2}{10}$ in. by $1\frac{9}{10}$. *Cabinet de France*, No. 240.

² . . . *Qui inviti fiunt decuriones* (Pliny, *Epist.* 114). That often occurred; the law of Malaga takes prevision of the case.

It will be said that Pliny had a special mission;¹ that, like Libo later, under Marcus Aurelius,² he had obtained of the Emperor permission to ask his advice in doubtful cases; that, finally, all the legates did not overwhelm the master with so many inquiries. This may be the case; but we cannot affirm it, since the official correspondence has perished with this single exception. In any case, whether the Emperor decides at Rome, or the proconsul gives judgment on the spot, the result is the same,—the dependence of the provincials. Emperors like Caligula and Nero, entirely occupied with their pleasures, allow things to go as they will; rulers like Tiberius and Vespasian, who find the task of governing the Empire sufficiently burdensome, give no thought to the petty details of the administration of cities; Trajan, a man accustomed to command and discipline, wishes to have order in everything, and this leads him to look everywhere. He had already created the *curatores*, to control the finances of certain towns; he sent commissioners extraordinary to suppress abuses in them. This was well. But these measures placed the government on a slope where it slipped easily downward, until it came to interfere, according to its good pleasure, with the smallest affairs, and stop them at will. A freedman of Vespasian offers to the Caerites to construct at his own expense a hall for their Augustales, on condition that they give him the ground; the municipal council cedes the land: but the consent of the curator is requisite, and that official delays ten months before giving it.³

The most important of Pliny's letters relates to the Christians. They had not justified the fears at first inspired by their adoration of the Crucified, which had appeared to some a menace of revolt. Saint Paul had preached submission to authority, "to the power who is the minister of God;" and Saint Peter wrote, "Honor all men."⁴ The Church did not even labor directly to destroy slavery, that foundation of pagan society. Believers had slaves, and Christian slaves, to whom Saint Peter said: "Servants, be in subjection to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward."⁵ They accordingly lived peaceably

¹ Borghesi, *Œuvres*, v. 407-415.

² *Se scripturum esse si quid forte dubitaret* (Capito, *Verus*, 9).

³ Egger, *Examen des hist. d'Auguste*, p. 390.

⁴ *Romans*, xiii. 1-7, and *I. Peter*, ii. 13, 17. ⁵ *I. Peter*, ii. 18, and Paul, *Colossians*, iii. 22-24.

and quietly, making converts among the poor by virtue of that charity which revealed to them brethren in all the unfortunate. But the essential condition of their religion was prayer in common. Now Trajan did not like associations;¹ we have just seen that he would have none, not even against conflagrations, and that too great assemblages, though for a festival, were an object of suspicion to him. He perceived, without being able to account for it, a secret power, as it were, undermining Roman society, and his letters bear traces of the displeasure he felt against everything which sought to go out of the established order. Hence it is not to be wondered at that the secret *agapae* of the Christians appeared to him to be dangerous. Besides, let us remember that, according to the legal enactments of this time, an attack against the gods of Rome was an insult to the Emperor, and that, in consequence of the union of politics and religion, unbelievers in the ruler's apotheosis became rebels against his authority. It is always so. Too often the present and the future are mortal enemies which, in the eternal transformation of things, come into collision and strife. The old world, destined to perish, wrathfully defends itself against that which attacks and will soon destroy it. The hemlock of Socrates, the cross of Saint Peter, the stake of John Huss, the pillory of the Puritans, the Bastille of the Liberals, have had their victims; but the deaths were triumphant. Trajan, narrow-minded and harsh, like all that Roman race, notwithstanding his real greatness was an enemy of novelty and incapable of comprehending what was then approaching. It would even be a matter of profound astonishment to see men such as Tacitus, Trajan, Pliny, Suetonius, and Marcus Aurelius unable to perceive the immense revolution which was in preparation, did not all history testify to the ignorance in which the rulers of the day persist touching the powers that are to rule on the morrow.

"It is, sir," wrote Pliny to Trajan, "a rule which I prescribe to myself, to consult you upon all difficult occasions. I have never been present at the resolutions taken concerning the Christians,

¹ He forbade them all . . . *Secundum mandata tua*, says Pliny, *hetaerias esse vetueram*. Yet he reorganized one of them at Rome; but it was the guild of bakers. "By an admirable foresight," says Aurel. Victor (*De Caes.* 13), "and in order to maintain perpetual plenty at Rome, he re-established and consolidated the *pistorum collegium*." On the right of association and the colleges or corporations of the Romans, see chap. lxxxiii. sect. 3.

therefore I know not for what causes or how far they may be objects of punishment. And I have hesitated not a little in considering whether the difference of age should not make some variation in our procedures. Are those who retract to be pardoned? Must they be punished for the name, although otherwise innocent? I have pursued the following method,—I have asked them if they were Christians; and to those who have avowed the profession I have put the same question a second and a third time, and have enforced it by threats of punishment. When they have persevered, I have put my threats into execution. For whatever the character of their religion may be, their audacious behavior and immovable obstinacy require absolute punishment. Some who were infected with the same kind of madness, but were Roman citizens, have been reserved by me to be sent to Rome.¹

“An anonymous communication was put into my hands containing a list of many persons, some of whom deny that they are, or ever were, Christians; for, repeating the form of invocation after me, they called upon the gods, and offered incense and made libations to your image; and they uttered imprecations against Christ, to which no true Christian, as they affirm, can be compelled by any punishment whatever. I thought it best, therefore, to release them. Others of them have said that they had been Christians, but that they had entirely renounced the error several years before. All these worshipped your image and the images of the gods, and they even uttered imprecations against Christ.

“They affirmed that the sum total of their fault or error had consisted in assembling upon a certain stated day before it was light to sing alternately among themselves hymns to Christ as to a god; in binding themselves by oath not to steal, or rob, or commit adultery, or break their plighted faith, or deny the deposits in their hands whenever called upon to restore them. Their ceremonies having been performed, they separated, and came together again to take a repast, the meat of which was innocent² and eaten in common; but they declared that they

¹ The right of appealing to the Emperor was the most important of the privileges which remained to the citizens.

² *Cibum innoxium*; to reply to the accusation often brought against Jews of immolating children.

had desisted from this custom since my edict, wherein by your commands I had prohibited all assemblies. From these circumstances I thought it necessary to try to gain the truth, even by torture from two women who were said to officiate at their worship. But I could discover only an obstinate kind of superstition, carried to great excess. And therefore, postponing any resolution of my own, I have waited the result of your judgment. To me an affair of this sort seems worthy of your consideration, principally from the multitude involved in the offence. For many persons of all ages, of all degrees, and of both sexes are already and will be constantly brought into danger by these accusations. Nor is this superstitious contagion confined only to the cities; it spreads itself through the villages and the country."

As a good courtier, Pliny adds that the evil may be stopped, that it is so already, since the deserted temples behold the crowd returning, that the sacred rites are again performed, and the victims, which hitherto had few purchasers, are now sold everywhere; and like a kindly man who would not send inoffensive persons to punishment, he asks the Emperor to grant pardon on repentance.

Trajan does not appear to have been greatly moved by the contradictory picture which his legate had sketched,—this impious contagion which was reaching the towns and hamlets, this new life which was displaying itself in the temples; and he refused to take any general measures. "In an affair of this vague nature," he says, "it is impossible to lay down any settled form. The Christians need not be sought after. If they are brought into your presence and convicted, they must be punished. But anonymous informations ought not to have the least weight in any accusation whatever."

We have seen from the measures adopted in the case of the Druids by Augustus, Tiberius, and Claudius what an arsenal of laws the Republic had bequeathed to the Empire wherewith to smite religions hostile to the Roman faith. Accusations of treason, sacrilege, illicit associations, and magic could be made against the Christians, and to all was attached the death-penalty. Trajan, averse to secret assemblies, did not, however, authorize prosecutions under this head against men of humble condition and represented

as inoffensive; but he did not permit public insults to the gods of the Empire, and with the peculiar constitution of the Roman state, with that official religion to which reference has so often been made, he could not permit them. Hence his reply, "Do not make search for the guilty, but punish those who by overt acts outrage the altars of the country."

This sentiment was so thoroughly Roman that two persons of consular rank, of very peaceable disposition, express themselves on this subject in the same fashion at two centuries' distance from each other. "Let no one," says Cicero, "have peculiar gods; let no one introduce new or strange gods, unless they have been admitted by public authority."¹ And under Alexander Severus, Dion Cassius makes Maecenas recommend to Augustus to punish the worshippers of false gods.²

Like orders, called forth by similar requests, were doubtless sent elsewhere; and what took place in Bithynia must have occurred in other provinces, with even more rigor, wherever governors were found less humane and populations less peaceable, who thought they avenged their gods by crying out in the amphitheatre, "The Christians to the beasts!" Thus the tradition of the Church places under this reign the martyrdoms of Saint Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, and of Saint Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem, — martyrdoms which we do not recount, because the internal history of the Church does not come within the limits of this general history of the Empire.³

The two letters which we have just quoted throw light on several points. Pliny, born under Nero before the burning of Rome, a lawyer, jurisconsult, senator, and consul, mingling in all the political activity of his time, knew very imperfectly when he arrived in Bithynia what a Christian was, — a proof that there had never been as yet any legal information against them, any solemn decision or general persecution.⁴ He punishes them because he

¹ *De Leg.* ii. 8 . . . *nisi publice adscitos.*

² lii. 36.

³ There are besides great doubts with reference to the *Acts* of Saint Ignatius, which appear to have been drawn up very long after, — according to Uhlhorn, in the sixth century (cf. *C. I. L.* iii. 103); and the authenticity of his *Letters* is open to much dispute.

⁴ We have seen what the persecution under Nero was; under Domitian there was a legal condemnation of certain citizens who, not belonging to the Jewish nation, *Judaized*, —

regards them as in revolt against the Empire, as contemners of its gods; against the civil law, by gathering in illegal assemblies; against the proconsular authority, by refusing obedience to himself. At the same time he tells of the simplicity of their faith, the innocence of their lives, of these fraternal love-feasts, these hymns



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which were their whole ritual, and the fundamental character of this religion of the poor, which caused him to select for torture, as persons specially informed, two women of the humblest station. In truth they and he in spirit belonged to two different worlds, and while speaking the same language, could not comprehend each other. Hence I am certain that Trajan, the rigorous

that is, abandoned the national faith; the words of Pliny prove that among these *Judaizers* were included the Christians, since he condemned some before having received Trajan's reply. This Emperor was the first to withdraw from the Christians, without distinction of origin, the privilege of the legal tolerance which had been granted to the sectaries of foreign religions. But there was, under him, no search, no *inquisitio*; the public manifestation was punished, which was of itself alone a public revolt against the law and the magistrates. Hence there was only a small number of martyrs until the great persecution of Decius (Origen, *Adv. Cels.* iii. 8). Even then, a church so flourishing as that at Alexandria only reckoned seventeen martyrs, — eleven men and six women (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vi. 41); and almost always the remains of the victims could be rescued.

¹ Lebas and Waddington, *Voyage archéol.* pl. 39.

guardian of military and civil discipline, sent a Christian to punishment with no more hesitation or remorse than if it had been a question of a refractory soldier or of a fugitive slave.¹ These cruelties are revolting to us, and these violations of the rights of conscience make us indignant. But it must be considered that the contemporaries of Trajan thought as he did, and could not think otherwise; that to them the Christians were rebels; and that in fact these men, who were about to break up the old order of things, really were the greatest revolutionists the world had yet seen. We are with them against their persecutors, though sadly forced to confess that the lot which they experienced was the lot of all reformers, the same which they themselves afterwards inflicted on those who undertook to replace an old law by a new one.²

Trajan, who inscribes on the penal code of Rome a new crime, that of Christianizing, attempts at the same time to re-establish the masters of Olympus upon their crumbling thrones. In a long inscription, recently discovered, we have proof of his solicitude to restore to the ancient gods their honors and to an old institution its authority. In the time of Strabo, Delphi was very poor, although the domain of the temple was very rich, since a single one of its forests of olives, on a spur of Parnassus, now yields an annual revenue equal to seventy thousand drachmas. But this domain had been invaded on all sides by neighboring cities, despite a solemn judgment of the amphictyons, who, a hundred and ninety years before our era, had fixed its limits. Trajan intrusted to one of the great men of the Empire the duty of making the amphictyonic decision respected as sovereign law, of restoring

¹ The number of the condemned must have been very small, for neither Tertullian (*Apol.* v.), nor Melito (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 26), nor Lactantius (*De Morte persecutorum*, chap. iii.) counted Trajan among the persecutors. From Domitian, says Lactantius (*ibid.*) to Decius, *multi ac boni principes Romani imperii clavum regimenque tenuerunt*. Christian inscriptions dating back with certainty to the third century — that is, one century after Trajan — are however very rare (*Comptes rendus de l'Acad. des inscr.* 1867, p. 168). M. de Rossi dates two of them in 107 and 110 (*Inscr. Christ. ant.* 2 and 3).

² Tertullian expressly says: *Sacrilegii et majestatis rei convenimur. Summa haec causa immo tota est* (*Apol.* x). It must be added that the law of treason not only involved the penalty of death, but also of torture (Paulus, *Sent.* v. 29, sect. 2). Besides, Tertullian well understands that these two societies are absolutely incompatible with each other. "The Emperors," says he, "would have believed in Christ, had not Caesars been necessary to the world, or if they could have been at once Christian and Caesar. . . . *Si aut Caesares non essent saeculo necessarii, aut si et christiani potuissent esse Caesares*" (*Apol.* xxi.).

to the god his property, and setting in place again the twenty-six consecrated boundaries.¹ Was this pious zeal on his part? Not at all. To Apollo and his associate divinities Trajan was perfectly indifferent. But after the example of Augustus and Vespasian, he considered the official religion as a necessity of public order. He was pre-eminently a conservator, and we must recognize the fact that he could not be otherwise.

IV. — THE PARTHIAN WAR.

WITH the exception of his measures against the Christians, Trajan had played his part well as master of the Roman world. The vast machine of government, so many times disarranged by intrigues, plots, and civil war, was in perfect repair and worked with regularity, driven by three motive powers, in constant action, — order in the cities, justice in the administration, and respect on the part of the subjects for the law and for him who represented it.

After a few years, therefore, the Emperor felt that he had gained, by his labors in time of peace, the right again to gratify his military tastes, and by new victories to revive men's recollections of his Dacian triumphs. Moreover, he was fifty-nine, or, it may be, sixty-two years old. If he did not now take up arms again, he never would, and his renown would be limited to the capture of some rude towns and the defeat of certain tribes whom his legates had been able to drive before them. Britain was too narrow a theatre, — good, indeed, for Claudius; the Germans afforded no pretext for any war; Dacia was becoming Latinized peaceably; and from the mountains of Caledonia to the borders of the Euxine no field of battle presented itself where any far-sounding exploit could be performed. On the south bank of the Mediterranean the Empire had reached an impassable frontier, — the desert. There was then nothing to be done, either in Europe or in Africa; or at least, so he thought. There remained Asia. In this direction one might find to accomplish what complaisant history styles great deeds; for instance, to make Armenia an outpost

¹ Wescher, *Mém. des Sav. étr. de l'Acad. des inscr.* pp. 54 seq., and *C. I. L.* vol. iii. No. 566. Cf. *Additam.* p. 987.



VIEW OF DELPHI (CASTRI), FROM THE SOUTHWEST.

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